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# LIVING THOUGHTS

—ON—

## LIFE'S PROBLEMS:

—OR—

## THE WORLD AS WE MAKE IT.

BY

J. WILSON, Ph. D.

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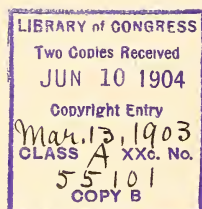
Author of "Practical Life," "Radical Wrongs," "Life Without  
a Master," "The New Dispensation," &c., &c.

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## INTRODUCTORY.

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The great sin of the present day is not unbelief or misbelief, but the entire absence of belief of any kind. Not one man in a hundred really believes in God or the Bible, but perhaps ninety-nine out of a hundred imagine or believe that they do, and it is this serious misapprehension that causes the trouble. If people believed and lived up to their belief, it might answer pretty well, but when they have no belief at all, and no concern about any belief, what can you say or do for them?

It is certainly a remarkable fact that, with a very few striking exceptions, no one cares to hear about salvation, either for this world or the world to come, and when it comes to such terms as redemption, regeneration or conversion, they hardly know what the words mean. In that direction they are simply without experience, and therefore they do not understand. People have no interest in these subjects, and they do not care to hear the question discussed. People like a lighter and more palatable diet; they want food that they can digest readily.

No one wants to be told how to lead a better life—that is one of the last things that concerns the average man or woman. People want to enjoy themselves and do as they please. They are quite disinclined to take life seriously. There is indeed very little encouragement for either preachers or teachers at the opening of this century, and in their efforts to turn the present generation from its perverse and wicked ways, they meet with anything but encouraging success.

There is no task more thankless than that of giving advice, even when it is asked. In most cases, the one who asks advice will hear what is said and then go and do exactly the contrary. To advise people, unasked, is presuming, and it will be found to be an impertinence that is sure to be resented. To give people information, or even suggestions, especially on the subject of im-

proved methods of living and doing, comes in the same category as giving people advice, and as a task it will be found, no doubt, equally thankless.

But how shall people ever learn or improve? If there were but one man in the world, he could not possibly make any progress, either in science or art. Indeed, in this case there could be no science or art. People cannot learn of themselves, any more than a grain of wheat can grow of itself. In order that a grain of wheat may grow, certain favorable conditions must be met. And so it is with knowledge on the part of mankind. The germs of all knowledge, all truth, all light are in the mind of every individual; and yet these germs will never be of any value, they will never materialize, they will never take root and grow, until these individuals come in contact with other individuals of their kind. It is true that knowledge, or learning, is something that cannot be transferred from one to another; and still it is something also that cannot be rendered available without some assistance and some association with other individuals.

People ought to do their own thinking, but as a matter of fact few are inclined in that direction. Most people desire results without the necessity of expending much effort in securing those results. They want thoughts served up by others precisely as they order bread from the bakery, or canned fruits, meat and vegetables from the grocer, prepared and ready for immediate use. They have a conception, absurd as it is—most of them have—that time devoted to thought and serious study is just so much effort wasted. They are not able to perceive that there are any appreciable returns from such an investment. As they derive neither profit nor pleasure from an undertaking of that kind, they feel that they have nothing to show for the sacrifice made.

Why should a business man, or a professional man, or why should a working man bestow much time or attention upon study or reflection? Such efforts do not properly come in his line. His vocation is simply to make money, and perhaps to obtain pleasure; and as there is neither money nor pleasure in thinking, the subject seems to him to be one in which he has no special concern. Such being the state of things as they exist now, and as they have existed from time immemorial, is it at all a matter of wonder that thinking should be left as the work of a few men? Such is the fact, whether it is remarkable or not. A few men, a very few men, have always done the thinking by which progress in this world has been effected. A few men only are writers, a few only are speakers, and only a few are students in the proper sense of the term. In this connection it should be

remarked that success in any line, or in any department, is for the few, and usually for the very few. Only a few attain eminence in any department; only a few become rich, only a few become learned, only a few become renowned in any of the walks of life.

But is there any connection, accidental or otherwise, between thinking and success? There certainly is. No man can achieve success to any extent in any enterprise without serious and long-continued inquiry and reflection. And in every case, it must be his own thought, his own study, his own reflection, upon which he must rely. What he finds that others have thought may give him a hint now and then, but in the main, he must either do his own work or fail. And yet so few people think! So far as the multitude is concerned, it seems to abhor thinking. At least thinking is ignored as something that is quite superfluous. The multitude never has thoughts—leaders and bosses and designing men alone have thoughts. It seems so much easier for people to trade on borrowed capital, and to use the thoughts that are supplied by other people. This is an age of trust, in more senses than one.

It is a noticeable fact that writers of books, and especially those on social and moral topics like this, do not publish their own thoughts and sentiments only, but also to a certain extent the thoughts and sentiments of the masses. These thoughts are never property, certainly never personal or private property. They are not purchasable or procurable goods in any sense. They do not come at command, but always unsought and unexpected. They are purely a matter of inspiration and revelation. If anything comes from heaven, the thoughts of men do. The humblest man on earth is a messenger of God—as much so as Moses or Paul was, though not in the same manner and of course not to the same extent. If men had not had thoughts and expressed them, we had never known what God was, or indeed that there ever was a God. In reality, God as we know him to-day is at best only a thought, a conception, a creation of man's brain. He is purely ideal, as everything else is that is not material. Every writer of books is an interpreter for the masses, a sort of amanuensis for the people. He writes what others think, and to a certain extent what all men think, but what they have not mastered, and what therefore they cannot express. With them the period of incubation is not yet completed. Hence the need of thinkers, writers, students, is obvious. These interpreters for the public are indispensable, much as their services are sometimes decried or derided. Under another view of the case, every thinking, progressive man does merely the work of

an agent, though his principal he never sees, and for what he does he is never called to account. There is a power impelling him onward which he never knows, never understands. All the world is a partner with him, a silent partner, in all that he undertakes. Indeed, he could have no thoughts and he could do nothing, if it were not for the world. How cruel and unjust it is for the world to complain of men, when it makes them what they are!

But whom shall the people select as their interpreters? This selection certainly ought not to seem a matter of indifference to them, nor should the result be left to chance. Almost all of the people's acquirements in the domain of knowledge, in the course of a lifetime, are taken on trust. Very little of the information that they receive comes from personal observation. It is taken wholly on faith, and implicit reliance is placed upon the opinions of others, most of whom are entire strangers to the learner. People as a rule are amazingly credulous—there is a tendency in man to believe everything he hears, whether it is good or bad. For instance, men believe the Bible, or claim to do so, solely as an act of faith, a sort of duty devolving on them. But certain it is, so far as evidence is concerned, the sacred writings have absolutely nothing to sustain them. In other words, they have no foundation to stand on, so far as concerns reliable proof of a documentary character. Who wrote the different books of the Bible, or why they wrote them, or what was their character and standing, are all important points on which we have absolutely no light. That Christ did not write a word of the New Testament, is well enough ascertained; that Moses even wrote a word of the Old Testament, has never been proven. But still our people, millions upon millions of people, believe the Bible, as a matter of faith and duty! Just so there are thousands upon thousands who believe Joe Smith's Mormon bible, though it is well enough established that Joe Smith never wrote a word of that book. So millions upon millions believe the Koran as an act of faith and duty, though Mahomet, the supposed author, never wrote a chapter of that book, prophet of God though he claimed to be. Indeed, as a matter of fact, Mahomet could not write, and Joe Smith was in the same predicament.

Excuse the author's presumption in this connection. He simply wishes to enquire why he should not be trusted and believed in what he states? He is still living and his history and standing are easy to be ascertained. He is not a mythical personage, and there is no pretence or claim that there is anything abnormal or mysterious about him. He is a plain, ordinary citizen—just such a man as you might meet if you went out on



the highway any day. [The author ought not to have mentioned this fact—it is the weak spot in his case. There is nothing about him to arouse curiosity or excite surprise. He is too honest to be the founder of a new creed. He is too modest altogether in his pretensions. He ought to be ready to magnify on short notice, and to falsify whenever occasion may seem to require. If he could not perform miracles, he ought to pretend that he could, and swear to it. If not willing to forge and alter documents, he ought at least to be willing to avail himself of the services of enthusiasts who might be ready to lend a helping hand in that direction]. History gives no account of any religion that was ever established on an honest basis. In all cases, as history informs us, the end justified the means, and frauds and falsifications were at the bottom of all these institutions. That was the manner in which success was achieved. People, all people, are extravagantly fond of lies, and especially so in all cases where there can be no possible doubt that they are lies.

The author of this book is a man of years, of education, and of extensive business experience. He has traveled much, studied much, and he knows the ways of men. He feels that he has mastered his subject, after fifty years of continued inquiry, and he fully believes that he understands what he is writing about. But, he is well aware that even this is not sufficient. He lacks one thing more, the main thing, and that is, *he is not divine*. In other words, he is not related to the gods. What makes the matter all the worse, he does not even pretend to anything like divine descent, nor does he believe in things divine in any form. However, he is not going to have any contest or controversy over this trivial matter. He takes his own medicine at all times—whenever he takes any. He wants the privilege of saying and believing what he pleases; and he is willing that everybody else shall be allowed to do the same thing. He is determined to be honest with himself, as well as with those with whom he is called upon to deal. He will neither believe a lie, if he knows it, nor will he concoct or advance lies for others to believe. He relies upon reason, and upon nothing but reason, and if people are not content with that, they can read the books of some other author.

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The doctrines of this work are quite different in character and aim from the doctrines found in the Bible and in other books which are regarded as authority at the present day. The purpose of this author is to induce men to rely upon their judg-

ment and to lead them forward to the development of their own powers both mental and physical. In this way the learner is encouraged to make progress upon his own personal responsibility. This work advocates not freedom for the few, as other works do, but freedom for all mankind. Instead of favoring the development of classes, ranks, orders and organizations, which always imply rulers, the author would, so far as practicable, suppress classes and orders of every description. He does not believe in one-man power, but in the power that is possessed by every man.

The leading feature in the system advocated and advanced in this work is individuality, self-reliance and personal independence at all times. Its aim is to inculcate respect for the rights, feelings and interests of those with whom we come in contact in daily life, while it insists upon a similar recognition of rights, feelings and interests by those who belong to the other side. It is opposed, under all circumstances, to the use of force as a means by which to control or influence the actions of men. It is opposed to any course that savors of revenge, or to any step that has no other purpose than to cause pain or produce sorrow in the hearts of those who in some manner have given us offence, or whose conduct we happen to consider criminal or disgraceful.

Every man ought to be governed in his action by the ordinary rules of common sense, and yet it is a fact that few men can be found whose actions are so governed. People have plenty of common sense, but strangely enough, it is about the last guide that they care to defer to. Men prefer to follow fashion, custom, authority—anything in the world but one's own common sense. They have become so accustomed to being governed by others in all their movements, following rule and precedent in all cases, that they are inclined to do absolutely nothing upon their own personal responsibility. Such is the distressing effect of long-continued habit! People do not want to bother themselves with self-government, and so they have got into the habit, fatal habit, of employing a director or master! It requires too much labor for a man to look after his own affairs, and so he employs an agent—another fatal habit. People as a rule do not trouble themselves to reflect upon any subject, because inquiry and reflection imply too much exertion. Men defer to others, to their superiors, in all things! That is the reason why there are so many flunkeys in this world, and so few men that are really manly and self-reliant.

No man should follow rules and customs merely because they happen to be recognized as rules and customs. Every man should do what he believes ought to be done, and at the same



time he should leave undone what he feels should not be done. Rules always hamper and embarrass those who make an effort to observe them. Their effect is enfeebling, and instead of aiding reason, they have a tendency to supersede it. There is no instance in a man's life in which he could safely dispense with reason. No man can accomplish any great results, nor can he attain to any important achievement, by simply following rules laid down by either himself or others. Rules are as apt to lead a man in the wrong direction as in the right one. A rule that is good for one man may not be good for another; a rule that is good for one place or one time is not necessarily good for every other place or every other time. An inflexible rule or law—and a true rule is always inflexible—*is not a safe guide for any man to follow.* To be able to do his best, a man must be free in his action. But a man who follows rules or laws can never be said to be free in his movements. Rules in grammar, rules in speaking, rules in writing, rules in art, rules in music, *always embarrass the performer.* The only rules that are worth noticing are those which each man makes for himself—and in that case they are principles rather than rules. The best way for the true artist is to follow his own feelings, his judgment, his sense of propriety at all times. If a person does not know anything, it might be necessary, and therefore proper, to follow rules. The Orientalists followed rules in their art, in architecture especially, and what is the result? Simply a most disagreeable stiffness and affectation, and an absence of naturalness, in all the forms and figures which we find presented in that part of the world.

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In this connection it may not be improper to consider the subject of "Other people's opinions." Opinions are things that are exceedingly common, and they are being offered freely to everybody at all times. And what is curious is the fact that those who do not know what they are talking about, give their opinions quite as freely and with as much assurance as those who do know. It is natural for every one to consider that his own opinions are infallible; and the author of this work confesses his own weakness in the same direction. However, he really believes that he never presumes to give opinions on subjects to which he has given no attention. It is not a bad idea at all for a man to have confidence in his opinions; a man's whole life is governed entirely by opinions, and what he thinks and believes is indeed all there is of him.

As to the opinion which other people hold in regard to the writings of this author, the matter has never given him any

serious concern. People are quite welcome to what they think. Thoughts prove nothing, especially when the criticisms offered apply to matters of which the critics themselves have no very intimate knowledge. Even a very wise man may know very little about some things. And on subjects on which wise men are ignorant, what would their opinions be worth more than that of the commonest simpleton? The wisdom of no man ever extends farther than to a few things. It must be remembered that any man's opinion is merely what he believes. And what should we care what some other man believes? As we have said before, belief proves nothing, even if it happens to be endorsed by a million, or even ten millions of people. No doctrine has ever yet been promulgated so absurd that it did not have many believers. Indeed, as a rule, the more absurd a doctrine is, the more rapidly it will spread and the more converts will be found.

A man who is a student and who thinks for himself ought to know, and what he knows ought to go farther, at least with himself, than what some one else happens to believe, either one way or the other. What a man knows ought to give him confidence and assurance; and the adverse opinions of those who refuse to believe what he teaches ought to occasion him no very great annoyance.

The author feels very thankful that he has lived to see the time when he is not troubled in the slightest degree over what is said or thought about the doctrines he advances. As said before, what people think or say is no proof in this connection, and so it is to be passed by as if it had no value. Even if people should praise the writer, he would be led to believe that there must be some mistake about the business. Plenty of people receive praise that they do not deserve; and on the contrary, many men are condemned for crimes or offences that they never thought of committing. When people praise or blame us, they merely say what they happen to think—sometimes in their ignorance, sometimes out of prejudice, and sometimes out of self-interest—to none of which do we ever refer as a source of reliable truth.

This author has no fear or dread of public opinion on questions of this kind. It is only the conscience-stricken, the timid, or the helpless that are ever worried over "what people think." Let people go where they please and say and think what they choose. If the people are in the wrong, as they usually are on questions of this character, the blame certainly cannot be thrown upon the author of this work. The misfortune is to be referred back wholly to themselves. The author has always been able

to take care of himself thus far, and he feels confident that he can do so a while longer. He has never coveted the money of the public, nor hankered after either their affections or applause. From his youth up, he has made it his practice to speak the truth and pay his own bills. He knows very well that he is not, by so doing, traveling the road that leads directly to success, but he began to follow the other route a long time ago, and it is rather too late to change at this the closing stage in his career.

The author has learned late in life, to his regret, that to be eminently successful in any undertaking, a man must be able to lie deliberately, and at short intervals. It is also desirable for him, so far as practicable, to have other people pay his debts, for it will be found quite inconvenient generally for a man to pay his own bills. There are other roads leading to success, it is true, but the route just indicated is the shortest by far and it is the one usually traveled. Success in any department depends largely upon arts and artifices, and upon tricks dextrously performed by somebody.

The author confesses that he finds great consolation in not wanting anything from anybody, or rather in not being dependent upon anybody for anything. He is not even anxious to sell his books, which is something so completely out of the usual order of things that people wonder at the phenomenon greatly. He does not even want position or thanks as a compensation for what he has said or done. He has never been concerned about any such trifles as these. He wants neither grace nor pardon, and he has never had any occasion to ask for favors of that kind from any source. As for rank, privileges and promotion, he hates the names. He wants no borrowed livery and no gratuities from anybody; at his time of life, he would not know what to do with trinkets like these if they were offered to him.

So far as the author's life and conduct are concerned, he does not feel that there is in either anything of which he should be either proud or ashamed. There are plenty of others who are richer, wiser and perhaps happier than himself, but that proves nothing as to the merits of the case. Of his lot in life, he does not complain, and most certainly others should not. He calls no man master, and he recognizes no being as sovereign. One stronger than himself might beat him, but he could not subdue him. He might burn and even tear his flesh, but his spirit, his thoughts, his will would remain unaffected, and he would go on believing as before. The spirit of man is quite beyond the reach of any agency either human or divine.

So far as the public is concerned, the writer is resolved that he will not go to the hill—there is no law that compels him to

do so. Let the hill remain where it is, and let it continue to be a hill indefinitely. As a matter of fact, the public is no better than other folks, and sometimes not quite so good. It is not a wise thing to be too deferential to anybody, and especially to the public. The tendency of extreme deference is to flatter people and give them too high an opinion of themselves. Deference has done more to spoil mankind than any other known agency. It has made potentates imperious and led judges to believe themselves infallible. The true course is neither to dictate terms to others nor to obey commands that come from those who arrogate to themselves an authority which they never rightfully possessed. Mahomet made a mistake in trying to do what proved to be impossible.

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Naturally enough when an author, after long continued efforts, has discovered truths which he knows are of importance to the world, he would expect encouragement and assistance from the learned classes, and especially from the press of the country, but if such be his hopes, he is quite certain to find himself disappointed at last. New truths are recognized by the world very grudgingly. If new truths should be introduced and accepted, the old and antiquated truths in vogue would necessarily be discarded, and such a result would affect unfavorably a host of institutions that are based upon old doctrines. New truths, in their progress, have everything to contend with, and their development is uniformly slow and uncertain. The old and the new cannot occupy common ground. Hence arises the the opposition and the resistance which the new is certain to encounter.

It is a striking truth, of which history gives us abundant evidence, that the educated classes are slow to accept new views at any time. They resist the truth and are unwilling to be convinced—imagining, as they do, that they know already quite all that is vouchsafed to man to know. They are averse to receiving instruction, and they seem to regard those who come forward with new thoughts as trying to encroach upon their preserves. It will be remembered that the original followers of Christ were not philosophers or scholars, but fishermen and simple-minded women of not a very high order. Mahomet's first convert was his first wife, and his success in this direction was so satisfactory that he kept on adding to the number of his wives until fifteen had been accepted. No, it is indeed asking too much to have the learned accept new doctrines, no matter how well founded,



when their heads are already filled with false notions that they have been accumulating for a lifetime.

What should we expect, and where should we hope to find individuality and independence in a country where everything is bought for a price, and where the servant must obey his master or surrender his means of subsistence? How could any man be expected to be a free man, or a true man, under such circumstances? How could he preach or teach, or even edit, successfully and satisfactorily, when not only his body but his soul belongs practically to some other person? In a state of bondage, literal or otherwise, individuality is dishonored, discounted, disregarded. In a state of bondage, individual development is arrested; or rather it ceases to exist. Where there are masters, slaves do not count; and if a slave happens to do anything, the credit uniformly goes to the master to whom the slave properly belongs. The same is true of employees—they never count. They perform a certain amount of labor and they are paid according to custom or contract. What they produce is not theirs, but their master's.

This is the legitimate, the inevitable, result of our wage system, or rather of our master and servant system. It is the same everywhere and in all departments where people are compelled to work for a living, or where money is looked upon as the chief end of man's existence. It is the same in the church, in schools and in business life generally. It is the same in war. To read history, a person would suppose that the general was the only effective man in the army. Certainly, he receives all the credit and claims all the praise. Speaking of the naval battle near Santiago a few years since, no one refers to what the gunners, or the seamen, or even the captains did. The sole question thus far discussed, is whether it was Sampson or Schley that destroyed the Spanish fleet.

But subserviency is by no means confined to servants or employees. No man is more subservient than the newspaper proprietor, who keeps his eye turned constantly in the direction of the weather vane. Nothing interests him so much as to ascertain which way the wind blows. He ought to lead, and, to a certain extent, control public opinion, but instead of that he contents himself with the humble position of a purveyor. There is money in such a course, but is that all that a man must live for? As a matter of fact the press of the country is spoiling its patrons by excessive indulgence and by a too ready submission to their whims and freaks. The press is too timid altogether in the matter of telling unpleasant but wholesome truths. A truth may be unpleasant and still be the very medicine that the public

needs. The press ought to be in advance of the times on all the vital questions which affect the welfare of mankind, but instead of that it is too modest, too diffident, too apprehensive, to advocate, or even to introduce, what might lead to dissent or objection on the part of its readers. It is so much easier and more pleasant to drift down the stream than to endeavor to turn it in some new direction. The press ought to be on the radical side, while as a matter of fact it is uniformly on the conservative side, especially in its treatment of grave social questions. The press sometimes criticises, but always in the mildest and most respectful manner possible. The infallibility of the state and the infallibility of the church are two dogmas that are defended as ably, as persistently, and perhaps as fanatically, by the press as they are by the clergy. If the press does not happen to have piety, it affects it, and as to its patriotism, it is usually of such a highly demonstrative character that no one would think of doubting its genuineness for a moment. The press, with rare exceptions, favors wars for conquest. It encourages charity expenditures ; and it also favors a liberal education, with all that term implies at the present day. Indeed, as already intimated, the press will generally be found to be partial to the popular side of all popular questions. To be unpopular, in the newspaper business, is simply to lose money. Hence unpleasant discussions are generally avoided. We would much sooner expect to find heresy in the pulpit than in the public press. Even advanced thought is generally supposed to be out of place in an ordinary public journal.

The trouble with the thinkers of this country, what few we have, is that they think a little in one direction and a little in another, but they pursue nothing to its legitimate consequences. They arrive at nothing complete, nothing final. They keep close to the shore and seem to have a horror of deep water. They are pagans on some points, Christians on others, and quite advanced and radical thinkers on other questions. There is no plan, no system and no uniformity in their methods of investigation. This is so all over this country, and it is so throughout the world.



A  
 REVIEW IN BRIEF  
 OF  
 THE LEADING DOCTRINES  
 IN  
 THE NEW CREED.

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The people at large are generally better than their laws, better than the creeds which they profess to accept. Our people to-day are much better than their Bible, and if they were still following the teachings of that book, we should have a most unhappy and unfortunate world indeed. As a rule people never follow the creed that they pretend to follow, and the reason is that people grow and progress, while creeds remain unchanged for an indefinite time. Creeds and laws are entirely wanting in elasticity, and that is their fatal defect. They are never adapted to any particular time except the present moment. This fact is well exemplified in the constitution of the United States. A hundred years ago, it expressed the sentiments of the people of this country, and it was fairly well adapted to their wants at that period. But at present, and for a long time past, it is and has been a sad misfit. Men want and need a new creed, as the people of the United States want and need a new constitution. What people thought and believed a hundred or a thousand years ago they could not possibly think and believe to-day. Hence the need of a change, a radical and complete change. No matter what people as a body profess, nor what line of policy they pursue in practice, they will be found at heart to be honest and true, and uniformly on the side of fair play. If people could only get rid of their prejudices and false impressions, their conduct in life would be greatly improved.

When a man starts out at the opening of his career, loaded down, as he usually is, with whims and false notions of all kinds, he reminds one of Santa Claus just ready to go down the chimney with his customary stock of toys for Christmas. Every one of these false notions is worthless for practical purposes, and the sooner the possessor gets rid of them, the smother and safer will be his progress in after life. A man must cease to believe in the providence of God, and he must banish from his mind all such ideas as those of necessity and destiny. To calculate upon Providence, is to depend upon something that is not even known to have an existence; and as to the question of fate, things may be predestined, and they may not; they may be necessary and they may not; but since we never know what is destined or necessary and what is not, we must proceed through life without any regard to such conceptions as these. Moreover, let us cease to talk about original sin, or sin of any kind, for at best such talk is unprofitable. All the sin there is or ever has been in this world is to be found exclusively in the minds of men.

There is very little, if any, true merit in this world. There is no merit in any man's doing his duty. That is something that every man ought to do. But to do what we need not do, and to do it because we wish, that perhaps is meritorious. There is no merit in obeying the law; none in obeying some master, some despot. There is none in observing our contracts, and none in behaving as we ought. That is something that may be expected from every man.

The only charity that is true and worthy, is charity for all, charity for every one without distinction, and not for a few favorites. And the same is true of love, justice, fairness. If we select as favorites those only that please us, that is clearly selfish, and there can be no merit in a selfish course. The only real charity is when bread is cast upon the waters where all can share alike, or when at least all have equal opportunities.

You cannot change the character of an act by any process after it is done. It cannot be excused, palliated, justified or compensated for by doing some other act, no matter how meritorious. One act has nothing to do with another act, and it has no connection with it in any manner. No man or set of men can take away the rights of another man—they cannot deprive

him of his manhood or citizenship or of his rights to either of those things. One man is as good as any other man, and he has as many rights and privileges under all circumstances.

The Bible doctrine is: "Do this, and you shall be rewarded." This is indeed a strange proposition! Not, do this

Rewards and Punishments.	because it is right or necessary, but do this and you shall have your pay for it! And if you refuse, you shall be punished—that is, you not only
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lose your reward, but you will be punished in the bargain! A person would suppose that these two leading motives, fear and hope, so forcibly set forth in the Bible, would keep everybody in the straight and narrow way, but it is well known that they do not. And why not? Because people learned a long time since that threats and promises cannot be depended on. In nine cases out of ten, they fail to materialize—some men escape the punishment they deserve and others fail to secure the reward that was promised. There could not be a worse system of government than one based on threats and promises. It always has failed, it fails to-day, and it always will fail. As a matter of fact, people cannot be controlled by other people in their doings—they can only be controlled by themselves.	
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All our wickedness and brutality, we venture to affirm, comes directly from our fear of the Lord and dread of punishment. People who are obliged to suffer are never

Fear of the Lord.	so happy as when they see others suffer. This suffering constitutes a bond of sympathy between
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men. People who suffer punishment delight in seeing others have a dose of the same medicine. If a man happens to catch the small-pox, he feels easier when he ascertains that some one else has the same disease. This removes the feeling of loneliness that a man would experience if he found that he alone was down with the small-pox. There is no mistake about the matter, misery does like company.

Compensation or threats have nothing to do with real goodness. What a man is hired to do is the service of a slave, and

Compensation.	what a man is compelled or forced to do by threats is also the work of a slave and it can have no merit.
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But it should be borne in mind that all the virtue, morality or goodness that is considered or contemplated in the Bible is an interested goodness or morality. It is bought for a consideration, or it is the result of fear.

We are told that we must do good. But what is good? That is the whole question. Is it what you say, or what we say? We are told to believe what is true, but how do we know what is true, whether we believe it or not? What is Good? How shall we be enabled to know? We never can know, and so we must keep on groping in the dark.

We torture and punish people, not in self-defence, not to protect ourselves, but to make them do as we want them to do, and above all to have them adopt our creed and follow our mode of life. But are we any better in this respect than they who lived in the Middle Ages? Did they do any worse than we are doing every day? Were they more wicked or more merciless than we are? No, all our punishments are pure torture, and the spirit that prompts this persecution is the contemptible and villainous spirit that moved those who lived and ruled in Europe from the 5th to the 15th centuries. Men want to be masters, they want their own way, they want to exercise power, and they delight in being cruel to unbelievers at all times.

Some people imagine that it is a great misfortune to lose a little money, or perhaps some patronage. But men should become accustomed to such things. If we have gains, we must have losses—that is inevitable, and we should keep ourselves prepared for such results. But to lose character and independence,—that is quite another matter. Such a loss is irreparable.

Wonderful is the influence of a good example. It is far healthier in its results than dogmas or ordinary instruction. Christ's influence upon the world was not in what he said, but in what he did. There is very little power in mere words—perhaps none at all. A law may be spread upon the statute book ever so elaborately, but it never amounts to anything until something is done with the law or it is put into execution.

Revenge! What a silly, senseless and savage thing revenge is! No, turn your back upon your enemy and let him pass on. If you take any pleasure in seeing him suffer, only wait. You are sure to be gratified, in the natural course of things, if you will only have patience and wait.

No one thinks of enforcing moral laws, or religious laws.

Why should we punish a man for disobedience to human ordinances and statute laws, which are merely expressions of the will of certain individuals? We do not pretend to enforce ordinances because they are right, but because they are law.

Public opinion! There is no public opinion. There is the opinion of this man and of that man, or of one hundred men. But that is a very different thing from the opinion of the public as a whole, which really has no opinion.

We might call a thing by a thousand different names, since it has a thousand different features in its make-up, or a thousand different points of view from which observations might be taken. There are also a thousand different directions from which we might reach an object, and each one of these directions would be as correct and proper as any of the others. We take pictures of things only from our point of view. We never present the whole of an object; at best we render only a small portion of it, and that very imperfectly. So when we name an object, we do so from some one feature that has especially attracted our attention. But we might with equal propriety call it by a hundred or a thousand other names. It must not be forgotten that any one view or any one characterization of an object is as true and proper as any other. Every object or creature has one special mark or characteristic by which it is known, as a hawk by its bill, the lion by its jaws, the camel by its neck. Such marks as these were used in the hieroglyphics of Egypt to represent objects.

Sick people live long because they are always nursing themselves; while strong people, being too confident of their powers, take dangerous risks and suffer the consequences.

Can you change a person? If you could, you would destroy him, for he himself would cease to exist after the change. A man is himself only so long as he remains what he was.

The way to conquer this world is to be above the world and have nothing to do with it—to be independent of it, to want none of its wares and seek none of its favors. Who cares for the love of men, or even their approbation? What does love or approbation amount to in the end, and how much value can you attach to it? If we



were loved alone and continuously, the case would be different. Love is a cheap, a very cheap article, and everybody is loved a little, some more and some less. But nobody is loved for all time; the favorite of to-day is sure to be neglected and discarded for the favorite of to-morrow. Consider the fate of the generals of our armies and the commanders of our navies—lauded to the skies one day, and hurled down in disgrace the next! Talk about love! What is so cruel, so exacting, so unmerciful, so deceitful, so treacherous as the feeling that we dignify with the name of love? Who would die for glory, for praise, for renown? Who would even live for it? Seen in its true light, all glory is despicable. What is glory based on? At best on an accident, and generally on falsehood or deception—always at the expense of others, and usually through their misfortunes. That some may rise, others must fall; that some may triumph, others must be conquered; that some may rejoice, others must suffer. That is an immutable law. Nothing is so ephemeral and so unsatisfactory as love, approbation and renown, and a sensible man will not allow himself to be deceived for one moment by anything so fanciful.

What is truth? Are there spooks? There are if you think so. Are there witches? There were for hundreds of years, and

there are still, for those who believe in witches.  
 What is Truth. Is there a devil and a hell and brimstone for bad people? Undoubtedly there is, for those who be-

lieve in such existences as these. The only things in the world for us are the things we believe in. If we do not believe in them, they do not exist for us. So the question whether Sampson or Schley or Long or McKinley fought the battle of Santiago depends entirely upon how you look at the matter. Things look different according to the side you look at and the point from which the view is taken. Very much—more than is generally suspected—depends upon the feelings of the observer. What Long's or Sampson's friends or Schley's friends have to say on this matter settles nothing.

It is easy to foretell the future, if one only knows how. Nothing is more certain than the future, if you only know the

elements that enter into the problem. Nature is regular and reliable, to a certain extent, in all her  
 Foretell the Future. doings. If it were not so, we could make no calcu-

lations and no provisions for the future, and such a thing as gaining a livelihood would be impossible. We learn to know that if we do certain things, certain other things will follow.



The more that we think, the more that we learn, and the better that we understand things, the better shall we be able to determine what will take place in future. We observe the motions, and courses of the stars, and we can determine how and where they will be a thousand years hence.

Be honest with everybody, and especially with yourself. Don't try and deceive yourself with fictions and false notions, with false hopes, false credits, and praises undeserved. Remember that there is nobody in all this world that is any better than he ought to be, or that is much better than his neighbor, when all things are viewed in a fair light.

Probably nine-tenths of all the worst crimes—robberies, murder and arson especially—go unpunished, because the criminal is never detected. And still, absurdly enough, people believe that we could not get along without punishing crime as we do! If we let nine-tenths of our worst criminals escape, what harm would there be if we let the other tenth escape, at least with a light punishment? We might resist evil, but we should not punish evil-doers. We should not contend with them.

It is a remarkable fact that now, four hundred years since the close of the period known as the Middle Ages, we are still living under Middle Age laws and usages, worshipping a Middle Age God, in a quiet and formal way, and pretending to adopt the doctrines, dogmas and conceptions of the Middle Age Bible. We are trying to make these strange doctrines harmonize with the culture and progress of the present day, and naturally enough we are meeting with some difficulties and embarrassments as we proceed.

What may have been the needs or demands of the past does not materially concern us at the present day. The problem to which we should apply ourselves is the problem of to-day. What is the wise and sensible thing to do to-day? That is, the question, and almost the sole question for us now to consider. Let us not allow ourselves to be governed by the dead—by the past, by Bibles, by ancestors, by tradition, by customs, by laws, by constitutions. Let us have a regard for the living, and if we are to be governed at all, let it be by masters and principles that belong to the present.

What is heresy? Who is a heretic? Every man who has a new idea, every man who resolves to think on his own account is a heretic. Every man is a heretic for all those with whom he happens to differ. Why is a heretic such a bad man for some people? Simply because he has an opinion—in other words because he does not happen to think as they do. That is the whole of his offending.

If men will sit down and put themselves in a receptive attitude, all things shall be revealed unto them. New thoughts and knowledge are not the exclusive property of any one man. Knowledge belongs to all mankind. Some see farther and see earlier than others, but all might see if they only would. Revelation always follows meditation; one man is as much inspired as another, if he only makes use of the faculties that nature has given him.

Perhaps there is no such thing as wrong after all. There certainly cannot be any such thing as a real wrong, if we admit the prevailing doctrine of excuses and justifications for wrongs. Some excuse, some palliation can be offered for any wrong. Why should we accept excuses in one case and reject them in others? Excuses seem to be variable; one excuse answers for one man and another for another man. It is just as you look at the matter, both in regard to the excuse and in regard to the wrong. Again, we say, perhaps there is no such thing as wrong after all. There certainly cannot be, if there are excuses for wrongs. We have either done wrong or we have not done wrong. If we have not, there is no need of any excuse or any justification. Or if we really have done wrong, how could excuses or justifications help the matter? Excuses are in all cases merely the invention of the Devil, and justification can hardly be said to have a worthier origin than excuses.

We shall not take bad men so seriously, when we come to realize that all men are somewhat bad, as all men are somewhat good—bad in one way and good in another. Why should we desire to punish bad men—those whom we call bad men—when we know that we are as bad as they are? We excuse insane men for their bad acts. But all men are insane—it is only a question of more or less at best. Some men have their insane impulses under better control than others—that is all.

No man should give commands ; no one has any authority to give commands, nor has he any rightful power to enforce them after they are given. Commands imply rights and

Commands. privileges that were never possessed by any human being. No human being ever had any power over his fellow men beyond that conceded to him by pusillanimous and indolent men who are willing to be slaves and therefore recognize some man as their master. No man is ever a king until he is recognized as king, anointed and crowned as king. The people make their kings ; no man ever made himself king. Those who read the Bible will notice that God himself was constantly clamoring for recognition, obedience, sacrifice, worship. The children of Israel did not do as God pleased, but as they themselves pleased. *That is the way that people always do.* No man can be obligated except by his own act—and even then it is impossible. We have no right to take advantage of other people's follies and mistakes.

What should a man do to be saved ? To this question our answer would be : Work. If any one is to be saved at last, he

Salvation. may be certain that it will be accomplished by his own unaided exertions. All help that is forced upon him in that connection will prove a damage to him in the end. Work makes a man strong, and it is the only thing that will strengthen him. Individuality, self-reliance, coupled with untiring effort, is the key to the whole situation. Indeed, a man's salvation in the proper sense of the term, is a matter of secondary importance. If he does his work well and proceeds cautiously and judiciously in all his movements, salvation will follow as a matter of course. The only salvation that is worth having is that which a man obtains by his own labor and forethought. Salvation by grace, by election, by favoritism, is not the salvation that is calculated to result in much good to humanity. A man that is a true and noble man disdains to accept what he himself has not fairly earned.

No general rule or law can be laid down that will meet all cases justly. What is proper at one time and in one place,

No General Rule. would be quite improper at another time and in another place. If a man lived alone, there would be no need of a code of any kind to govern his actions. But as it is, man is associated with others, and he must measure his movements to a large extent by what he understands to be public sentiment. Properly speaking, he is under no obligations to others and he need not call any man master. What he needs to do, and all that he needs to do, is what his best interests

require; and his best interests require that he should be at peace with his neighbors and have at all times a wholesome regard for their feelings and wishes. A man who does not meet these conditions should pass for either a madman or a fool. The community should not undertake to exercise control over any one of its number, except so far as they, the community, may suffer harm from his mistakes or misdoings. Beyond that limit, no community has anything to say or do about what course any man or woman may choose to pursue.

How should a man conduct himself? What course should he pursue? In all things and at all times he should conduct himself like a sensible and just man. Anything is right that a man does, provided he does not injure or offend some other man.

Might confers no right upon any man; to confer a right or to give power does not come within the province of any individual. Nothing guarantees rights or privileges in any case—neither merit nor wisdom have any power in that direction.

Might is  
Never Right.

Under all conditions and all circumstances, one man or one woman, or one child, is as good as another—possesses equal rights and is entitled to equal privileges. Nothing can confer privileges upon any one, and nothing can destroy them. Ranks, orders, classes or conditions in life should not be recognized.

One as Good  
as Another.

Nothing can excuse or justify a wrong—for if it is excusable or justifiable, it is not a wrong. Even good intentions or worthy motives make no difference with the merits of the case. A man is responsible for what he does, even though he is not responsible for his motives. A man is never really to blame for what he does, for at all times he is supposed to do what appears to him perfectly right and justifiable under the circumstances.

No Excuse  
for Wrong.

There is absolutely no remedy for a wrong after it is committed. No balm in Gilead can afford the slightest relief in such a case. If a man suffers harm, there can be no actual compensation for the damage occasioned. What shall balance a life lost, or even the loss of a limb? Property stolen may be restored, but even that does not change the character of the original offence. If a man robs, nothing

No Remedy.



that he can afterward do can palliate the crime or obliterate the reproach. Hence it is that all punishments, after the crime is committed, are senseless and even unjust. They afford no remedy; there is no pretence that they render any real service to any one. Every punishment is purely an act of revenge, and nothing less. Viewed in its true light, punishment, no matter how or by whom inflicted, is brutal and savage.

Men have no rights, no privileges, no duties—because they have no masters who are qualified to enforce these rights and duties. Only those who are servants can have rights; only those who are masters can have privileges, or even rights. Slaves have no rights; they have only duties.

Should men always tell the truth? What right has any man to demand the truth from us at any time? We owe him nothing.

We are under no obligations to any one. If we were, we should be slaves. Slaves alone have obligations. We may tell a man the truth, or not, as we please. We may even decline to answer him at all. Society might institute a custom on this matter which no doubt it would be wise for us to observe—not because society has any right to make any demands upon us, but because we find it to our best interests not to antagonize those with whom we are associated.

No man should make contracts, because contracts bind and hamper him, and they force him often to do things that he does

not wish to do. The will that we should always follow is not a past or defunct will, but our will at the present moment. But in contracts a man is compelled to obey an old and extinct will. What we willed yesterday has no connection with what we will to-day. Our will of yesterday is another man's will, not ours.

Nothing is really right, and nothing is really wrong; nothing is really good or really bad—only as we consider that it is so,

believe it to be so. If people could only change their belief, black to them would appear white, and things old would appear new once more. All the qualities of objects that attract our notice or affect us in any way have their seat in our feelings or in our perceptions. What is high for one man is low for another; what is green to one man is blue to another, and plenty of people perceive no color where

color exists in abundance. Two extremes are always the end of one and the same line, and there is no mark to separate them. There is no actual difference between goodness and badness, or largeness and smallness, or strength and weakness, or between heat and cold. No one could tell where one begins and the other ends. In all cases the difference is one of degree. Things are for us merely what we think they are, and their qualities depend upon the standard with which we compare them. A man of moderate height is a giant when compared to a pigmy. A day that is hot for some people is cold for others.

Why should we condemn a man because he is more wicked than we are, or because we imagine he is so? He is wicked in

one direction while we are wicked in another.  
 Judge Not. The lowest criminal has not a single quality or characteristic that we do not also possess. If he steals, is it not a fact that we have similar propensities, though perhaps under better control? We curb our passions while criminals do not, or perhaps cannot. It is absence of temptation, in many cases, that makes some better than others. No man knows what he might do if he were driven by want. Circumstances change, as well as develop, character, and they bring to the surface conditions that otherwise would never appear. No man can say truthfully that he is better than other men. No man knows what he might do until he has been sorely tempted.

Should men obey the laws and yield to government? It is generally prudent to do so. We must be prepared at all times to

Obey Laws? encounter evils, and uniformly to bear them patiently. Christ is right in saying: "Resist not evil." That is, do not combat evil, do not contend with it. As a rule, evil is increased by contention and combat. Our governments are made stronger by the resistance we offer them. We at least give them an excuse for arming and entrenching themselves. But while we might deem it expedient to submit to laws, we would by no means be so far a coward or hypocrite as to commend them. We would at all proper times do just the opposite. No law can deserve commendation, because no law can be just and proper. No man or set of men has any right to enforce laws; but without enforcing them they amount to nothing. Resistance may indeed become necessary and unavoidable at last—that is a course which each man must decide upon for himself—but it must be observed that, as a rule, contention never improves matters. It is rare even that revolutions lead to anything more than a change of masters. No lasting improvement will



ever be secured until people's minds are enlightened and their hearts become softened in some way. We should respect every man's opinions and belief. While we do not agree with him, we need not oppose him. We need not even deny the truth of his position—that is an open question that may be left unsolved. And so we should treat laws, which are only evidences of somebody's opinions, or at least of somebody's wishes. They are just or unjust according as you view them—and somewhat according to your interests and your early education. But one thing should always be conceded, namely, that on this question of the propriety of laws, the judgment of the humblest citizen is worthy of as much respect as that of those who made the laws.

We would not go out of our way to resist or resent wrongs, but we would never consent to them. There is a sort of negative, undemonstrative resistance that is often more effective than resistance of a more forcible character. Resist Not. If a man takes a firm stand and refuses to get out of the way, he is not easily overthrown. As a rule people submit too readily, we may even say too cheerfully. Tyrants have a wholesome regard for those who meet them boldly and determinedly on all occasions. Usually people who are trodden upon are those who prostrate themselves in the first place. Those who do not respect themselves deserve no respect from others. It should never be forgotten that there is not force enough in all this world to compel a man to surrender, provided he has decided that he will not surrender. A man might be badly hurt, or even killed, and still not surrender. To surrender is an act of will, and the will is something that is not controlled by foreign influence. The martyrs did not surrender. They actually triumphed over their adversaries, even in death. There can be no consolation in killing those who simply refuse to believe or disbelieve.

We would not teach that men should love their enemies, any more than we would teach people to hate and wrong themselves. Love Enemies? We might pity, and even despise our enemies, but we have never yet progressed so far in social science that we should caress our enemies for the injuries they had inflicted. However, the very last thing we should think of doing would be to strive to injure some one simply because, through crazy impulse, he had done something to give us pain or cause us injury. If we did so, we should be no better than the offender himself. If we treat others kindly, will they not be inclined to return similar treatment? Certain it is, that if we

treat others badly, either with or without occasion, we are offering an inducement for them to act in the same manner in their conduct toward us.

It must not be forgotten that we sometimes call enemies by the wrong name, and while we regard them as enemies, they are really our friends and benefactors. The reverse is equally true. We frequently regard people as friends who are not our friends, and who, no matter what their motives or purposes may be, are a source of injury to us rather than benefit. We are apt to be too sensitive, too selfish and too easily offended. We do not make sufficient allowance for the circumstances that control men and actually force them to do as they do. A man may harm us, and often does, while in the legitimate pursuit of his own calling. The bird that in endeavoring to secure a breakfast takes a few of our cherries, or perhaps some hills of corn, is by no means our enemy. Its crime is not robbery ; its act is as legitimate as any other act. Are we ourselves not perpetually harming some one, both in business and out of business, sometimes unintentionally and sometimes otherwise? Why, we can scarcely turn without danger of treading on somebody's toes. If we gain a suit, somebody must lose a suit, if we win a victory in any way, somebody must suffer defeat. The general of the army rides in triumph over the bodies of the fallen—sometimes of men of his own army and sometimes of the enemy. Nothing is ever gained that does not come, either directly or indirectly, at the expense of some one else. No, our views of enmity need reconsidering, readjusting and reconstructing. As a matter of fact, everybody is our enemy and everybody is our friend ; or nobody is really our enemy, and nobody is our friend. The best of friends will occasionally do us an injury, and the worst of enemies, we shall find as we come to know them better, have as many virtues as we have ourselves. There is no real evil in this life ; neither is there any unalloyed good. Here again, as everywhere, the whole question is one of degree. One thing is perhaps more of an evil than another thing is—that is all. There is nothing that is unqualifiedly bad or unqualifiedly good in all this world. No man was ever born who proved himself good every day in the week. The best of men have their discouraging symptoms, and the worst of men have their pleasing features. All men have their moods and times. No man, no thing, has a constant, unvarying character. Characters change as the winds change. It is never all sunshine with anybody, however much he may claim to the contrary. A man who pretends to be always good has a poor memory, or he does not know himself in-

timately. We call those people our enemies who encroach upon our domain or who interfere in some way with our enjoyments. As if we owned some part of this planet! Really we do not own a foot of it. Nobody could encroach upon our preserves if he tried, for the fact is that we have no preserves. We are all squatters. We call the American Indians our enemies, when the truth is that we ourselves are the original offenders. That is a way we have of excusing ourselves for the horrible crimes we have committed! We seek to palliate our offences by calling our antagonists hard names. This is a bad way, but it is generally adopted, especially in Christian countries.

Would we combat or condemn religion? Most assuredly we would not; we would condemn and combat nothing. We would let it die, as it is dying, a natural death. We could not, if we would, hasten its final departure and dissolution by even a single day. It belongs to other days, to another and an older generation. It has achieved much for mankind, and in that direction its work has been done well. When people did not read, did not think, and did not know, they needed a star in the heavens to guide them. They needed Bibles and angels and priests and demons to serve them. They needed support, encouragement, and direction, and this they found in the sacred writings which are embodied in the Bible. But everything that comes to the front in this world has its mission and its time; it has its period of birth and development, and finally there comes the last period of death and decay. The Bible and the so-called Christian doctrines have reached this latter period already. They may, and doubtless will, linger for hundreds of years yet, but in a mild and modified form. It is hard to decide when anything dies, or even how it dies when it does die—in a certain sense, and in a very true sense, it never dies. In a certain other, and also true sense, it is always dying. When did the Roman Empire come to an end, and when did the Roman people die? In reality they are not dead, and they will never die. They live in those who represent them to-day, in their successors, in the effects and influences which they still exert upon the world. So it is with the Bible and Christianity, and so it is everywhere. Christianity will, properly speaking, never die, never cease to have its influence, directly or indirectly, upon the history of mankind. In old Bible times people wanted miracles; they wanted to be surprised, amused and deceived. They liked fraud better than reality, and if they got the truth, they always insisted upon having it in small doses and more or less adulterated. In other words, they wanted it watered with

allegory, and in that form the Bible appears to-day. It is mostly, if not wholly, allegory. But something will come to take the place of our Bible some day—something has come already—something that is newer and more in harmony with the spirit of the age, something that has the confidence and the cordial endorsement of intelligent people. So it is and always has been with all the things of earth. There is no rest, no cessation of motion in this world. Change is everywhere. Beings are born to die—and they die to be born again. In a new and more or less disguised shape, and with a different work to perform, they continue to exist even after they cease to be visible to man.

We have reached the age of reason—an age such as the world has never known before—an age when not only a few men think, but all mankind think and know and reflect.

Age of Reason. Men have ceased, or to a large extent they are ceasing, to trust in Providence, in God, in angels, in masters and in medicine-men generally. This is an age of pure individuality, an age in which the rights of men are acknowledged at last; an age when it is generally conceded that the work of this world is done solely by the individual, and to him the harvest properly belongs. In the past, and for all the thousands of years that have gone by, the case has been quite different. Until recently the individual man was counted as nothing, while the group, the tribe, the people, society, government, God, were “the whole thing.”

The doctrines taught in this book are for this age, this generation. We do not assume that they will be found acceptable for all ages to come. Such has certainly not been the history of truth thus far—truth has only been for a season, and even for a locality. What is truth for us is not truth for the heathen, nor for the Mahometans, nor for the Hindoos. Truth, so far from being everlasting and universal, is strikingly ephemeral, and instead of being for the many, it is really for the few. Such truths as are taught in this work are surely for the few, because only a few can understand and appreciate them. Truth is never truth for those who do not and cannot understand its realities. Truth is merely what people believe—nothing more and nothing less. If nobody believed, we should have no truth. People should not be too strenuous on this matter of truth. It is not such a constant and unchangeable thing as people believe it to be. It is the last thing in the world to contend over—people might as well struggle over so many square yards of moonshine. They would have nothing after



they had secured it. It is something to teach, something to believe, but it is silly to contend for truth, or even for principle. It will be remembered that principles, like truths, vary. Everything is true, and everything is false; it is at best, as already intimated, *only true for a little time*. Why contend for what will disappear to-morrow, or for what will be changed in both form and substance to-morrow? Was there ever a theory or a belief that endured for any considerable length of time? No, with all our prating about truth—everlasting truth, as we term it—*it turns out to be nothing but a bubble after all*. Such is truth! We would not fight for it; we would not fight for anything, unless it might be for our continued existence, and we are not sure that even that is worth any great amount of sacrifice. A man can be brave without fighting. Indeed, there is more true bravery in peace than in war. Suppose the martyrs had fought, would that have made matters any better? Probably not.

For ages the individual has been sacrificed and slaughtered, as if to be sacrificed were his sole purpose in life, his simple reason for being. Men submitted to such outrages. Men submitted to such outrageous treatment because they had been taught from the beginning that to submit was their simple duty in life. What has always been wanted, and what is wanted still, is patriots, men who will sacrifice themselves to save their country, their city, their family, their friends. What a dreadful delusion it is that one man ought ever to sacrifice himself to save some one else! As if one man is worth less than another man, or for some reason is not so good as another man! It is a senseless delusion to believe in the first place that by sacrificing a man or two, or even a million of men, a country, a race, a city could be saved. Suffice it to say it is a great blunder to believe that either men or countries are ever saved by the blood of innocent victims. It is a horrible doctrine to teach, that blood is necessary or serviceable in any case of salvation! They are knaves who teach that the gods are appeased by blood, or that a man must be walled up in a building to make sure that the structure will never fall. *Sacrifices never save anybody—they have absolutely no remedial value whatever*. Throwing a man overboard never saves a sinking ship; and if a ship could be saved in any such way, it would not be worth saving, for it must be a frail affair. What saves ships is their inherent strength and their ability to breast the storm. The ship sinks not because it carries an extra man, but because it is in an unsound condition. Sacrifices never saved a people or a city. Athens survived no longer because of the death of Socrates. The Roman Empire was not saved by

Christ's crucifixion. The only ones who are benefited by sacrifices are the priests, who divide the spoils between them. Nothing could be imagined that would be more contemptibly selfish than the common practice of sacrificing this man or that man, or perhaps a dozen men, merely to protect or perhaps to enrich some favorite. There is in itself no virtue or remedy in killing men under any circumstances. Men will die fast enough under ordinary conditions, without taking steps to hasten their departure. Besides, it is wicked to kill men at any time or in any manner; it is wicked to cause pain to any of earth's creatures. There can be no excuse for killing men, or even for torturing them, and it is a base trick and deception to pretend that such cruelties are either useful or necessary. To pass laws to protect scoundrels and to excuse their villainies, is a sham that ought not to deceive even children and fools—and it seldom does. *No law can make a wrong right*—God himself could not do that much.

The men who are placed in this world are clearly left to take care of themselves. If they are compelled to go into deep water, they must either know how to swim or sink to the bottom. No angel will ever be at hand to save them when danger overtakes them. In their infancy their parents, if they are good parents, will do something towards their sustenance and protection, but even such friendly offices last at best only a few years. Quite early in life every one is left to paddle his own canoe, and whether he does or does not finally suffer shipwreck, depends wholly upon his own ability and exertions. A man must live and learn—that is his sole mission in life. How much others may have learned before him, or how much others about him may know, is to him a matter of very little consequence. The true question is, what does he himself know, and what use does he make of what he does know? This is the important problem for every man to solve. If he be wise, he will go promptly to work, and he will apply his energies judiciously so far as he moves. He will learn by his own mistakes, and not bother about the mistakes that other people make. He will neither pray, nor sacrifice, nor worship, knowing as he does that no invisible being can be of any service to him in any emergency. If he is finally protected, it will be solely because of his own strength and wisdom—there is no other strength or wisdom that will avail a man at any time. If he prospers, it will be simply because he deserves to prosper—and if he fails, it will be because he deserves to fail. The world is ready, and the work that needs to be done is ready. Will men meet the demands of the hour? Will they do what they know must be done



and should be done? To succeed in life, men must be ready to meet the conditions of their case. People should not sigh and pray for assistance and protection—it is a great deal better for them to assist and protect themselves. A man should be governed in his action by his intellect and his common sense. If he has neither at command, he is to be pitied; indeed, he is not made for this world. He will find himself simply a prey to designing men, and his life will end in failure.

There may be, and no doubt there is such a thing as fate or luck, but we know not what it is nor how it will be, and so we must proceed as if there were no such influence in Fate and Luck. existence. We know we must die, but the day or the year we never know, and so the proper thing to do is to proceed as if death did not enter into the problem.

After we have come to know ourselves, we may come to know and understand nature. Nature is always at our service, if we only learn to make use of the opportunities Know Nature. offered. Our destiny is to a large extent in our own hands, and more so than is commonly supposed. Whether we live long or short, depends somewhat upon our inheritance, but largely upon our efforts and upon the direction which we follow. Whether we live well or ill, depends largely upon ourselves. We may read and inquire, we may profit by the experience of others, but when we come to the decision at last, we must depend wholly upon ourselves.

Let us not make it our business to complain of this world; let us not be perpetually talking about how bad it is and how often nature fails. As a matter of fact, this world is neither good nor bad—it is what it is, and we are what we are, and let us make the best of it. We have, it is true, pain and sickness and distress, but these are only one side of the picture. We must, it seems, have these things in order to have other things that we like better. Things go by doubles. Negatives imply positives; development implies decay, birth implies death; so light implies darkness and pleasure implies pain. Instead of constantly putting ourselves in opposition to nature and criticising it, while evidently we cannot change it in the slightest, our best course would be to adapt ourselves to its conditions as we find them, and this course is open to all men at all times.

It is astonishing how blind people become at last by being

accustomed to certain wrongs! For instance, some people do not know what a murder is when they see it committed, or when they know that it has been committed. Some people think that a man cannot be guilty of murder if he acts under the law. But that is a serious mistake. The law cannot take away the sin of murder—it cannot change the character of the act in the least. When the electrician sends a man to eternity with 4,700 volts, what is the act but murder? “He is dead,” said one of the attendants at a recent execution. “We will give it to him once more,” added the electrician coolly! He wanted to make a sure thing of the job, and earn his money. How depressing it is, in this enlightened age of ours, to think that a man can be a public executioner and still hold up his head when he passes decent people on the street! It was not so in the Dark Ages.

No matter what a man does, or what he does not do, he cannot be deprived of the rights and privileges that belong to men. A man that is born a man always remains a man, through all the vicissitudes of life. Every man has faults, but he has virtues also—and he usually has them in equal measure with other people. How or why should we ever judge or condemn a man? What measure shall we apply in order to ascertain the extent of his badness or the amount of his goodness? A man’s merit does not come from what he does but from what he is. So Christ taught. The worst culprit has plenty of redeeming qualities, and no more than that can be said of the best of men. Even Czolgosz, stolid and stupid as he was, said just before his last moment came: “I am sorry I could not see my father.” Did those who ushered him into eternity manifest half as much feeling?

It is not well to bother ourselves with things that are mysterious, with things that we do not know, and have no need to know, while there are so many things that are at the same time knowable and useful.

Is love essential to the good of society and to the prosperity of mankind? We should say not. There is no love or charity in principle, and no principle in love and charity. Principles are general and apply to all indiscriminately; but love and charity are partial in their application and are confined to favorites only. Justice knows no distinction of persons, but love and charity are matters of favor simply. The latter imply choice and selection—choosing some and rejecting

others. No one can love everybody, but people can be just to every one. Love is selfish and capricious. It can never be relied on. That a man loves us to-day is no guaranty that he will love us to-morrow. We must learn to be just and kind to people from some other motive than affection or attachment. The world is full of good people who are far from being lovable, while those that are loved are adored only by the very few. Nothing is properly sacred to any one; or everything is properly sacred to every one. One thing is at least as sacred as another. So it is with love. People who love everybody in general, love nobody in particular—that is, they do not love at all. The love that Christians have in view, and which they talk about so enthusiastically, is a selfish love, a partial and particular love, a love for one's friends, a love for those whom one likes, with an absolute indifference, if not hatred, for those whom one does not like. This is Christian love as we find it in practice. Even Christ says: "Love your neighbor." But why not love everybody, even those who are not neighbors?

How about charity and disinterested benevolence? It is doubtful whether such a thing as disinterested benevolence exists.

We are never charitable to all—that would be impossible. At best we are charitable only to a few. It is like government protection, which is a species of charity—something always for the few at the expense of the many. Public or obligatory charity is not charity, properly considered. Like everything that is forced or compulsory, it is destitute of merit. Again, in practice, charity generally results in injury rather than benefit, even to those who are supposed to be aided. Charity renders people indolent and helpless. It is offering a premium for idleness. There is only one kind of gratuitous assistance that does a man any real good, and that is the assistance a man gets when he helps himself. There is no obligation on our part to help others; we may or may not help them as we judge best. We have no duties, because we have no masters to assign us duties. Nature evidently has made no provision for those who cannot help themselves; in the ordinary course of things they are left to perish. It is well to help those in distress, but, as we have already intimated, not because we feel that there is any such duty imposed upon us. It is no more our duty than it is the duty of a million of other men to relieve distress in any particular case. Why should we sacrifice alone in order to render aid that others are equally obligated to make? Primarily, we are expected to help ourselves, and if all did so, no one would need assistance. All we do outside of helping our-

selves is a work of supererogation. Besides, we get no thanks, and rarely does the result in any case compare with the sacrifice made. To make a business of charity, as is done at the present day, is corrupting in its influence. It is not the poor usually who depend upon charity so much as the agents whose business it is to dispense charity. In all our charitable institutions, it is the officers and attendants who are the real beneficiaries. In America, as in Great Britain, public charity has resulted in a painful scandal. There can be no question about the fact that charity multiplies paupers and developes poverty. Relieving wants in one place leads to new wants in another place. If a person is presented with a horse, he finds that he needs a wagon and harness, and something to feed the horse.

What is right, and what is wrong? Everything is right and everything is wrong. There is no standard of right and wrong that will apply in any two cases. What is right is what people have come to believe to be right. What is right for one people is wrong for another. Where everybody steals, and where a living is made by stealing and robbery, nobody considers such acts criminal or even improper. This was so in Sparta, and it is so to-day in all countries where people live by war and rapine. The interests of people determine customs and settle all questions of right or wrong. There is no other standard at last than self-interest. Even we ourselves have one standard for our friends and another for those whom we consider our enemies. We even consider it right to go to war and kill our enemies on sight, generally for some offence that we merely imagine they have committed.

There are no real sins, no real crimes. There are only things that some people regard as crimes. If things were not declared to be wicked or criminal, no one would think of calling such acts by such names. Nothing is positively good or positively bad. What is bad at one time is good at another. It is usually considered bad to kill a man, but if he has done us great injury or given us great offence, or if he has violated our laws, that makes a difference in our view of the matter; and if we happen to kill the delinquent in such a case, it will be regarded as a case of "justifiable homicide." What we mean by doing right, is doing what is considered right by the community in which we live. There is no other standard. Our main effort should be to keep out of other people's way—and especially out of the way of those who are inimical to us. The lower animals have learned as much as that.



There is no room for ambition in this world, no occasion for the exercise of its power upon men. There are no adequate in-

Fame.           ducements offered to any person to make sacrifices in order to secure fame. Of all follies, the pursuit of fame is the chief. To seek honors and titles, to covet badges and gold lace as ornaments for the person, is absolutely childish. Savages, too, like glitter and tinsel, but such things are quite beneath the notice of rational men. However, the savage and the child remain a part of a man's nature during the whole of his career—in other words, he never quite ceases to be a savage, and he never quite overcomes the tendency to act like a child.

Morals are founded upon customs, and they never have had or can have any higher source than that. Morals change as the feelings and interests of people change. There is  
Morals.           nothing in morals that may be regarded as established for all time. They have no support but the opinions of men, and, as we know, the opinions of men are always controlled by interests and feelings.

Let us have no sacrifices, no ceremonies. They are a wicked waste of time and material. Sacrifices are an abomination, and ceremonies are worthless and delusive. How  
Ceremonies.       senseless, how cruel are sacrifices of all kinds! Simply an effort to unload the sins of one who is guilty upon the shoulders of another who is innocent! Criminals and dishonest people always like to find those who are willing to make sacrifices for their benefit. The reason, and the only reason, why Christians love Christ, is that he gave up his life to keep their own poor souls out of purgatory.

Shall we live after death? Shall we think and feel and know and have a real practical existence after death? No. We Shall  
After Death.       live after death precisely as we lived before birth, and its value to us will be just as great, and no more.

Let us have scriptures of some kind, some sacred writings that are instructive and that are adapted to the wants of this commercial age of ours. What Moses wrote or  
Scriptures.       what Plato wrote concerns us but little just now. The question is: What do wise and sensible men think to-day? What such men thought a year or a thousand years ago, does not affect the solution of the problem in the slightest degree.



There are no single things. The simplest thing known, as a sound, a stream, a force, a thread, is really a compound or Single Things. collection made up of many parts. Every body implies an organization, and this again implies parts. All things are parts of things, and yet, paradoxical as it may sound, they are complete in themselves, and therefore not properly parts. All things are organized groups, like the tree or plant. Nothing is single.

Things are only as we look at them. If we feel badly, things will look badly to us. Whether things please or displease us, depends largely, if not wholly, upon our constitution and tastes. If we could make ourselves better, all the world would at once appear to us in an improved form. If there is sunshine in our soul, there will be sunshine outside. Above all things, cultivate a cheerful and contented spirit. One's whole happiness depends upon that.

People can profess religion, and they usually do, without accepting or adopting it, and even without understanding it.

Every man is entitled to what he earns. But if every man got what he fairly earned, nobody would be employed. There would be no inducement to employ men. Nothing Earning. ing would be gained thereby. People get rich by what other people earn—and that is the only way by which any man can accumulate property.

In matters that concern yourself only, do as you please. In matters that concern others, follow custom or the public sense of propriety in all things.

As intimated before, there are no good or bad things, except as we think. Badness or goodness is simply what we think and feel. So music is good for one, bad for another, Good or Bad. and indifferent for another who perhaps does not care for music. When we say people are bad, that is not the slightest evidence that they are bad. It is merely an evidence of what we think and how we feel.

Let there be no punishments, no pains, no tortures, no sorrows of which we are the occasion. We should at least hold ourselves guiltless, no matter what others may Punishments, decide to do.

People think correctly always, so far as they think at all. But people differ in conclusions, varying with the course pursued, in their inquiries, as well as the distance they travel. If all followed the same route and traveled the same distance, they would reach substantially the same results at the close of their investigation.

We see things only as they appear to us ; we know, and can know, nothing of them beyond that.

People know much of this world only on condition that they have traveled through it and seen much of it. A practical acquaintance is far better than theory and meditation. Contact with the world is the only thing that sharpens the intellect. A man might study in a garret a thousand years and then know really little of the true character of the world in which he lives. People can read about foreign countries, and even study pictures, and yet they must see these countries themselves to know them.

Does it follow that because we see nothing, there is nothing to be seen? What you see or do not see, or what some one else sees or does not see, has nothing to do with the matter. What we see has nothing to do with the existence of truth for any one but ourselves. There are thousands and millions of things that none of us have ever seen, and yet we know that they exist, for others.

People should honor no one, worship no one, thank no one—not even God, the supposed ruler of the universe. All that men obtain that is worth obtaining must come from their own efforts, their own care, their own sagacity and thoughtfulness. The help of other people is of no real service to anybody.

What real inducements are there in this world for anybody to make great acquisitions? If a man gains the whole world and loses his own soul, what is the profit to him? Or if he does not lose his soul, how much better is he off? At best a man can use only what he uses, and what he does not use and cannot use is a damage to him. The richest and strongest man in the country gets only his living ; and a man of very moderate means gets as much as that, and then, too, he has no surplus wealth to be bothered with.

Self-reliance should be the main support of every one. Individuality is the basis of life. The continued effort of nature is to individualize; the efforts of man seem to be just the opposite. Men like crowds, and they have a tendency to herd together. A man can control his own actions at all times, but not the actions of others, and certainly not the acts of God. What a man cannot depend on, he should never count on. A man may get some assistance from outside sources, but it is always an uncertain and unreliable factor, and it usually costs in the end a great deal more than it is worth. People imagine they get something for nothing, *but they never do.*

There are no accidents in nature, and none really in practical life. Whatever occurs comes in the natural course of things.

Fatalism. Fatalism is an element that we should never regard, or certainly never count upon. Things would result differently, if they had taken a different course. Results are necessary, but the course that leads to results is not necessary. That is in all cases a matter of choice and will.

There is no exhibition of true power in the affairs of men. What men seem to be compelled to do, they really do at last of their own will. The will of others cannot be affected by what we do. People may choose between this thing and that, but they always do as they will in the end.

The first step towards sound health is the cleansing of the system from all impurities and from all germs of disease. So in preparing the mind, or the soul, for the business of life, the first step to be taken is to remove all antiquated notions, all unsound and hurtful beliefs, such as the belief in fate or necessity, in the unavailability of evil, in the necessity of making sacrifices and paying homage to God and the state, in the observance of worthless customs and practices, in the duty of obedience to masters, and in the need of love and charity for other people.

Do not be so particular about your honor. It does not possess half the importance that you imagine it does. Do not be so anxious to make things even with everybody. Such an equalizing process is expensive. Things will come out even at last without any special effort on your part—if you will only wait.

People would save themselves much worry and trouble if they would only get improved notions of value. Things have no

Value. value in themselves, or at least one thing is as valuable as another. The values that things have is the value that men assign to them, and it is for this reason that what we call the value of things is constantly changing. Things have value only so far as people covet them, and things not wanted by any one are absolutely worthless. We prize things as a rule too highly, and hence we are afflicted by their loss. If we estimate things lightly, as one should, we should avoid the sorrows that usually follow losses. We place too high a value on what we assume to be *our* property. If we conceded that it belonged to some one else, or that it did not belong to any one, we should have a lower estimate of its value and suffer less from its deprivation.

Spinoza says there can be no sensible living in this world without knowledge. Therefore it should be the first and chief

Knowledge. aim of man to gain knowledge. But above all, he should endeavor to ascertain what knowledge is in the first place. Some things that are called knowledge go by the wrong name.

Man is part of nature, and to live well, he should be in harmony with nature. To have knowledge, is to know how to promote one's harmony with his surroundings.

As a matter of principle, societies and organizations of all kinds should be discouraged, because they hamper and hypnotize the individual. A man can be independent only Organizations. so long and so far as he lives alone. The more he associates, the more he must surrender to the will and wishes of other people. When a man does his own work unaided, he has no one to whom he must render account for what he has performed.

To fully understand things, we must bring them nearer to us. When they are remote, we fail to notice all their features and peculiarities. As we get nearer to things,

Nearer to Things. our interest in them increases.

If we did not love so much, we would not hate so much. It is better not to love at all, since then we should not hate. It

Love. is impossible to tell exactly whether love comes from hate, or hate from love. They are intimately

associated, and even inseparably connected. We hate those often that we formerly loved; we hate those from whom we have expected much and received little. Disappointment always occasions an unpleasant shock. It is better not to ask or expect anything from any one. It is only from our friends, from those whom we love, that we demand so much. Those with whom we have no relations we regard with indifference, which is much better than to either love them or hate them. It is better to have but few close friends, outside at least of one's own family. Much of our trouble in life arises from our being too intimate with people—they expect too much of us, and we expect too much of them. Disappointment is sure to occur in such cases. It is rare that any friend can meet all the requirements of some other friend. We never hate people that we do not know and with whom we have had no relations. We expect nothing of people who are not considered our friends. Our enemies never disappoint us, and we know very well where we shall find them. Not so with friends always. It is a well known fact that we like people best of whom we really know little. It is generally not advisable to know people too well. Most of the social enjoyment in travel arises from the fact that you do not know those whom you meet, and they do not know you.

First of all, let us endeavor to get clear and accurate notions of things—of wealth, of pain, of pleasure, of happiness, of good-

ness, of love, of friendship, of truth. If we knew Our Desires. some things better than we do, as wealth, pleasure and fame for instance, we should not desire them. To live comfortably and sensibly, let us always curb our desires. We desire things too often and too much; we desire what we cannot get, or what we ought not to have; and as a matter of course, unsatisfied desire uniformly leads to pain and disappointment. People that ask little, that expect little, that desire little, are seldom disappointed. We often desire what is not good for us, forgetting that what is good for others, under other circumstances, may not be good for us under different circumstances.

Men are continually dying, since, as we know, they are continually changing. All things that change, even in the slightest, cease to exist. A thing continues to exist only so long as it remains precisely what it was in the beginning. What has changed has disappeared and exists no more.

Continually  
Dying.

Ignorance leads us to fear a thousand things that we should



not fear if we were not ignorant. Let us strive to overcome ignorance, or banish it in some way.

Do not worry over the nature of truth or over obligations to truth. Do not contend for anything so perishable and so evanescent as truth. There is no such thing as truth for all men. Truth is a local and exclusive matter. It is at best only a one-sided affair, or perhaps a many-sided affair.

The safest way is to pay as you go and owe no man anything. Above all things, make no compacts or contracts, and keep yourself free from obligations at all times. By so doing you may continue to be a free man.

The rules that are laid down in this work are like all general rules—they cannot be safely followed in all cases. There comes a time when the best of rules must be disregarded. Rules. But these exceptions do not weaken the rule in the least. It is impossible to lay down a rule to fit all cases. An approximation to truth is the most that is to be expected in any instance.

We should avoid waste at all times, and yet three-fourths of all that men do, or build, or contrive, is waste. Our buildings are sufficient evidence in this direction, so is our dress. In our effort to warm a room, there is far more heat that escapes than is ever utilized. In all that civilized men do, they are frightfully wasteful.

To do what is expedient is sensible, and to do what is sensible is necessarily expedient. That is the chief rule that should govern man's action at all times. To undertake to follow duty, or to do what is right, is simply a vain effort. There is really no duty devolving upon any man except one who is a slave; and as to what is right between men, that is purely a matter of opinion. But is not our opinion in such a case just as good as that of other men? Who shall presume to tell us what we ought to do? According to our view of the case, *there is no such man living*. We are our own judge and our own master. We submit to the laws because we find it expedient to do so, but we protest when we do so. We never lick the hand smites us; we simply try to brush the hand away so that it shall not smite us again. We do not love our enemies,

we do not hate our enemies. We simply turn our back upon them and keep out of their way. When we seek society, we always prefer friends ; and in the absence of friends, we seek the company of strangers. We keep entirely away from those who are not inclined to be neighborly at least. Indeed, the less a man has to do with his enemies, so long as they remain such, the better it is for all concerned.

It is all of life to live ; there is no other problem set before men which is so worthy of their concern. If a man knows how to live, he knows all that he will ever need to know.

It is wrong for us to assume or declare that this or that is *necessary*. It is only a matter of opinion at best. How shall we ever know whether anything is or is not necessary? Who shall decide that question? Sometimes we use the word *necessary* as a synonym for expedient. We say it is necessary to have government, or religion, or law, or education. Again, it may be said, this is merely a matter of opinion on which men differ. We never know that anything is necessary, for it belongs to the future, and of that we know nothing. We say government is necessary for the protection of the people. But does the law protect the people in all cases? Does it do so in any case? We say punishments are necessary, in order that society may be protected. But that is only an excuse, a mere pretence. We do not know that such things are necessary. Many get along very well without punishments. Nothing is necessary, nothing is unavoidable. How shall we ever know whether things are necessary or not? We say this or that is necessary for self-defence, but that is merely an excuse, a pure fiction, a pious fraud. Taxes are said to be necessary, but only because we imagine so. There is not the slightest evidence that they are either necessary or unavoidable.

There is only one kind of accumulation that deserves to be encouraged, and that is an accumulation of what is needed for future use. All accumulations beyond this, all Accumulation. those made to prevent others from acquiring, or those made with a view to make a display of great gains, deserve the severest condemnation from every man. In other words, we would discourage the accumulation of wealth in every form and under all conditions.

Never do anything without having some sensible aim or ob-

ject in view. *Let everything count.* That is simply business—it is also common sense. The savage is fully justified in looking with surprise upon one who walks merely for exercise. A savage does nothing of the kind. He never walks unless he wishes to go somewhere. *Ennui* never troubles a savage, and when he does anything, he always expects some tangible, appreciable result from his effort.

Talk about our love for truth, when nearly all that we do is based upon some fiction, or upon some conventional lie! Like children, we are inordinately fond of pretending, Love for Truth. or of acting some assumed part. We like to play do this and play do that. And oftentimes, like children, we pretend to be mad when we are not mad at all; or we play that we love people, when in fact our affections are of the mildest type. That is merely a part of the programme. It means nothing, and we should never be deceived by what is known to be pantomime.

Some things, mere trifles in themselves, we take too seriously; while other things, really of first-class importance, we pass by without any particular attention. We Seriously. should always draw a line of distinction between things unimportant and things worth noticing.

“So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai.”—Esth. viii.-10. That often happens. It is a common occurrence for men to fall into pits which Haman. they have digged for others. It does not pay to go to the trouble of setting snares for one’s enemies. Digging pits and setting snares is not a nice business any way.

We should never make an effort to do injury to those whom we consider our enemies. Perhaps some day they may become our friends. Indeed, it is curious to see how Enemies and Friends. slight a thing makes a man your enemy, and again how slight a thing makes him your friend. Really, being a man’s enemy or being his friend is not such a great affair after all; and there is not such a great difference between the two as people commonly imagine. There are worse people, far worse, than those who happen just at this moment to be our enemies. The very best of men may be our enemy, and the very worst of men may be our friend. Whether a man is our friend or our enemy proves absolutely nothing as to his character and value. That we do not like a man, has no significance whatever.

Everybody is somebody's enemy and somebody's friend. The matter is not worth talking about. Even our friends often do us harm, sometimes innocently and sometimes for a purpose. Mortal enemies are few, and from these we should stand aloof as we would from a madman. What we call enmity usually arises from slight causes, and it hardly ever extends below the surface. The less we bother with enmity the better; let the disease run its course. The more attention we give the matter, the more the trouble is aggravated. In nine cases out of ten where people get offended at us, it is for something they have heard or dreamed, and not for something that they know. It is silly indeed for people to become easily offended. The best way for us in such cases is to wait till recovery sets in and the patient begins to feel better.

Do not kill. Do not torture or torment, do not punish. This rule is without exceptions or qualifications. Kill nobody, kill no creature, kill nothing. This rule is good throughout its whole extent, and it should be applied, like all rules, as far as practicable.

Be economical at all times, which is the same as to avoid being wasteful. It is the part of a fool to be extravagant or wasteful. Be judicious and careful, always being circumspect, always prudent and wise.

Presents are corrupting; they are meant to be corrupting by those who make them. Any person who gives without having some purpose or design must be classed with idiots. Presents are Corrupting. There is no essential difference between a present and a bribe. Every bribe is merely a present—it is something for nothing. People should never give something for nothing; people should never receive something for nothing. It is not judicious to do so.

We should free ourselves at once from the absurd notion that what we have believed we should continue to believe. Rather the contrary. We should cease to believe what we have believed, for all the beliefs of the past must be wrong—that is, wrong for people of the present time. If a belief has prevailed for a long time, the inference follows that it is out of date, since the times and conditions have changed. People of to-day cannot live successfully upon notions that are two thousand years old. Men should be free at all times to believe what they choose and what seems to them to be adapted to

their present wants and interests. The interests of other people are no affairs of ours—only so far as they happen to affect our interests.

Have no secrets, and never do things that you are ashamed to have the world know. Or expressed in another form, no man should be ashamed of what he has done, for what he did, it is to be presumed, he believed to be entirely right.

No Secrets.

The best talent that any man can possess is common sense. Even success in business depends more upon sound judgment than upon genius.

You cannot convince a man by telling him he is *a fool or he is wrong*. He must be allowed to have his own convictions—he must be self-convinced. How much you are convinced does not affect the case at all with him. You must be patient and indulgent. Even if this man is a fool, it is well to remember that all men are fools at times. How often are we ourselves compelled to change our opinions because they are found to be wrong!

Patience.

Why should we care what people say of us? If they speak favorably, we are pleased; but if they speak ill, why should we worry? Why should people be concerned about what they cannot possibly help? Nothing that we can do can prevent people from thinking and talking. Besides, we are not responsible for what they think nor for what they talk. Talk is usually idle; it is also very common and very cheap. The safest of all rules is to let people talk. It does them good and makes them feel better. Only think what a punishment it would be to people to prevent them from talking, and even telling a lie occasionally! It would be a wicked obstruction placed in the way of things to prevent them from taking their natural course. There should be no law against slander. People who slander others are liars and nobody ever thinks of believing a liar.

Mistaken impressions! Under what a load of oppressive burdens do we constantly labor! Mistaken notions, ideas, conceptions and beliefs! That they are false, is a fact that we well know, but they pass current, like our silver dollars, and they are accepted as genuine. Men are executed in all countries on no other evidence than false impres-

Impressions.



sions in connection with the guilt of the accused. Such things are a common occurrence in every land.

As all things are independent of each other, and all are disconnected, there can be no such thing as order or series. It is impossible to classify things without ignoring differences that are known to exist. For instance, all the propositions in this review are quite independent of each other, and they are so treated. There is no order or sequence in them.

To be fair, to be just, to be true to ourselves, we must divest ourself of our interests and prejudices. These things are the *impedimenta* that retard our progress through life.

Two opposing or incongruous assertions may be true. One truth never excludes or negatives another truth. It has nothing to do with another truth.

A thermometer has no feelings, no weaknesses, no impressions, no whims; and therefore it registers temperature correctly. With man the case is different. All he judges from is his feelings, and feelings are always deceptive in their indications. A man who enters a room can never tell with any sort of exactness just how hot or how cold it is. So he consults a thermometer.

The only business that is uniformly well conducted is that which the person interested conducts for himself. Public business is generally a failure, especially from the standpoint of economy, because those who conduct the business have no direct personal interest in its success. Their interest is to make all they can out of the enterprise and still keep out of state prison.

"A large tax in the aggregate is only a trifle for each individual. It is such a little thing!" Read history, and you will find that this is the very argument that has hypnotized people in the past and enslaved the world. It is such a little thing! But big things are made up of little things. As a rule people would rather listen to the sophistry of demagogues than take the advice of friends. That was the trouble with the Athenians.

How does it come that the people as a body are always the under dog? That question is not hard to answer. Because the

The People. people are nobody—nobody in particular, nobody that amounts to anything. Nobody speaks for them, nobody acts for them, and they cannot speak and act for themselves, for they have neither voice nor mind. They are nothing but a shadow. Why should not the people always remain the under dog?

The true doctrine is that everybody should pay his own bills, but that is a practice, we must confess, that does not work well in civilized countries. Just the reverse is the rule Help Others. that prevails there. In such countries it is expected that everybody should be doing something continually for everybody but himself. But if that doctrine should be carried out exclusively and literally, what would become of the man who was always doing something for other people and consequently neglecting his own affairs? He would soon perish as the fool perisheth. What an idiotic practice this would be! But people should not be deceived. It was never intended that all should be good. Only a portion of the people, the fools, are to be good—the fools are to obey the laws, pay other people's debts, reverence their masters, believe in God, and finally go to Heaven! The fools, we repeat, make the sacrifices. The wise men take the good things of earth as they go along. They fare sumptuously and live like princes every day. They do not bother their heads about the world to come.

Stand up; do not be afraid. Never be a hypocrite. Be honest with yourself and candid with others at all times. Never

Stand up. say what you do not mean, nor mean what you do not say. Be a slave to no man. Never assume the attitude nor perform the duties of a slave, even for form's or fashion's sake. Never call yourself a crawling worm, when you know you are really a biped. Do not make a practice of depreciating yourself merely to appear polite and stand well in society. If you can lift two hundred pounds, or five hundred pounds, and know you can lift that weight, do not be ashamed of it and go around saying you can only lift half as much. If you do not respect yourself, how can you expect to be respected by others?

If people say that a man is great or good, and even swear to it, does that make it so? What does reputation amount to? What reliance shall we place upon the claim or sayings of men?

Much depends upon our aims in life. Men never reach higher than they aim; if they aim low, their attainments will of course be low. Let us not bother our heads to pursue worthless things. If we chase bubbles, we shall only secure bubbles when we happen to be successful in the pursuit.

If the end ever justifies the means, why does it not always? On that basis, why is not any and every crime justifiable? It certainly must be so, if the end justifies the means. Means and End. One end is as good as any other end; it is always good for some and bad for others. But in fact nothing is justified, except that which justifies itself. No, the end never justifies the means—*there is no connection between the means and end in any case.* There is no relation between the act and the object of the act. Aims are wholly in men's minds—they are intangible, indefinable, and therefore wholly imaginary. Nobody ever knows what a man's aims are, and it often occurs that he does not know what they are himself.

What is the use of trying to reason with people who have no reason, or who at least do not believe in reason? For them there can be no evidence, and to undertake to argue with such people is time misapplied in every instance.

What is a law? Merely the dictum of somebody. What is an emperor? A common mortal, just such a man in every respect as we meet in our walks every day. He is often as good as other people, but never any better. What is a King? His wearing a crown makes no difference in either his worth or power. It only makes him appear a few inches taller. If he wears a gown, that is merely to conceal the fact that he has feet and legs like other people. There is nothing about the dress and appearance of a king that is not meant to deceive and impose upon the multitude. The sole object is to make the king appear to be what he is not—and the same practice is followed, on a smaller scale, by people in the common walks of life.

Every man should be estimated and rated at what he actually is, without any reference to his relations to other men. Circumstances do not make men—neither office, rank, position or descent has anything to do with a man's real worth. Every man is merely what he is, and no power on earth can ever make him more than he is. Nothing

can be added to a pound to make it weigh more than a pound. If a man is six feet tall, not the highest hat in the world could make him a half inch taller than he is. Race is nothing, color is nothing, rank is nothing, family is nothing, country is nothing, religion is nothing, when one comes to estimate the true worth and character of individuals. *There is no such thing as real merit, no such thing as one man's being greater or better than another man.* There is no merit in a man's powers, for he does not create them; there is no merit in his conduct, for at best he does only what he can do and ought to do.

Men are continually believing and acting contrary to what they know. They know there is no power or efficacy in a written law—a whole law library has no more power over the conduct of men than would be found in a bank of common sand—and yet people go on obeying the law because they feel that they must, and they imagine that the law could do something serious to them if they did not obey it. In the same way people carry a rabbit's foot about their person as a charm against evil. They know it is nothing but a common rabbit's foot, still they believe in the charm just the same. So men worship a king or a governor as a god, though they know very well that he is not a god but an ordinary mortal. We might extend these illustrations indefinitely, but it is not necessary. Every day in our lives we are acting contrary to what we know to be the facts of the case. *We are constantly saying one thing and meaning another.* We claim to love the truth, and yet we adore lies and deception above all things. Talk about truth in this world! *It is lies that always take the preference.* No wonder that our library shelves are loaded down with novels. It only adds another proof that men love lies rather than truth. St. John tells us that the men of his time loved darkness rather than light, and they do still. They always prefer shadows to the glorious light of the morning sun.

We should take the world as we find it. There is really no occasion for any one to complain. Things are right as they are. All is Right. Life is right, death is right—both are necessary, absolutely necessary, to the continued existence of this world. The one always implies the existence of the other. So it is with pleasure and pain, light and darkness, and indeed all other extremes. One side, or one pole, is as necessary as the other. If there is an under side, there must also be an upper side. Pleasure is merely the absence of pain. Life implies the absence of death; where life is, there death is not. Life gradates

continually into death, and from death again new life arises. There is no well defined line of demarkation between the two. So, less darkness means only more light. Health is only a relative term ; no man is entirely well, neither is any man entirely ill. If we had no knowledge of illness, we should have no appreciation of health. Remember that evil is only what we call evil, and bad is simply what we call bad. It all depends upon how we feel and how we view things.

What is applause worth? What good does applause do, what change does it effect? It merely indicates how people feel, and often also how little they know. *Truth and Applause. merit are never strengthened by applause.* If our achievements and acquirements depended entirely upon what other people thought, we should be very unfortunate indeed. Applause is, like love, wholly a freakish affair, a matter of feeling, rather than of judgment. People love merely what they like, what pleases them, and applause is founded upon the same basis. Merit is a matter between the man and himself—it is something with which others cannot meddle. How can the world measure the merit of men? *It never does.* What the people, the multitude, say that a man is worth, is no proof of what he actually is worth. It should be constantly borne in mind that men have no just appreciation of anything. All they have at best is an approximation—never in any case do they attain to exact knowledge. Our whole conduct in life is based upon assumptions and false notions—some of which we correct before we die and many of which remain with us to the end. It often happens that we replace one false notion with another false notion, and so go on *ad infinitum*.

Remedy through law! There is no such thing as a remedy through law. Law is, in practice, a curse to humanity in general, though it may result in benefit to a few. Consider *Remedy in Law.* the delay and expense of law ; consider its injustice and uncertainty. How perfectly helpless the government is to afford relief in emergencies like the coal strike of 1902!

Who rules this world? *Those only who think.* Who get all the good things of this world? Those who think and plan and have an eye to the future at all times. Those who do *Thinkers.* not think are the ones who must get their living by hard work. Their lot in life resembles that of the patient ox.



There is too much twaddle in this world altogether. Everybody talks too much. Everybody says a thousand things that he might better leave unsaid. It is such a waste of breath !

Nothing adds to the strength of the strong man like hardship and want ; and nothing has such a tendency to weaken a man as constant favors and assistance. In this way the children who are growing up to-day are being persistently spoiled. They do not have to put forth any efforts themselves, because everything is done for them. The course that is being pursued all over the land is certain to be fatal to the rising generation. If you want to ruin a son, give him all the money he wants and then let him go and do as he pleases.

At best, all that men can render on any question is simply their opinions. It appears so to them—*never anything beyond that*. But because of their opinions, it does not follow that the facts are so or so by any means. Usually one man's opinion on a subject is no better than some other man's opinion.

Do not pay too much attention to imaginary injuries—to those that hurt the soul, the mind, the feelings, our sensibilities—in other words, things that affect our dignity. If we gave no attention or consideration to these offences, we would not know that they existed. A high sense of honor is a troublesome possession for any man.

People have an idea that they see all that is before their eyes. But in fact they see only what they happen to notice, which is not a thousandth part of what they might see if they would only look. Even a picture presents only one out of very many phases of an object, each as true and important as the one that is presented.

Never grieve about what cannot be helped ; never grieve about things that may never occur ; never grieve at all, for the suffering that comes from grief never brings any returns.

Why should a sensible man ever be angry ? Anger is madness, and madness is allied to insanity. It is not manly to appear mad, any more than it is manly for one to be beside himself from any cause. When a man is enraged, he has lost his senses, and he is properly called mad.

When a man is drunk, the case is not very different. In both cases a man has lost control over himself for a certain period of time. There is nothing to call for anger and nothing to justify such an exhibition at any time. Anger usually takes its rise in pride and conceit, and if people had less of these things, we would see less evidence of anger than we do. People who have extravagant notions of honor and of their own importance are very easily offended, and when people are offended, they usually act inconsiderately.

It is not conscience that makes cowards of us all. It is usually the fear of losing a little money. People would stand up for their rights, if they were not afraid of losing some patronage.

Protection is always a one-sided affair. We protect one man always at the expense, and often to the injury, of others—and so it is always with gifts, favors, privileges and subsidies. These things always act unjustly upon some men, for what is the gain of one man is always the loss of some other party. We protect the cat at the expense of the mice, little animals that have in fact as many rights as cats have. The poor are always protected and favored at the expense of the wealthy and middle classes, who to say the least are as worthy as the poor are. Most people are not protected or favored in any manner. Tariffs, and protection of all kinds, are for the benefit of the few always, *and never for the public generally*. Those who imagine that the case is ever different will find by experience that they are grievously mistaken. To tax the public for protection in any case, is always outrageously unjust and oppressive. The only just protection that could exist, is *protection for everybody*. But that is a kind that no one has ever yet seen.

As a rule people never care who suffers nor how much, if they themselves are only *protected*. We protect our sugar by placing a tax on other people's sugar. Somebody pays the bill that covers the cost of protection in all cases. This is the way that government works in all its departments—*it favors a few at the expense of the many*. It is impossible, as already intimated, to favor one without wronging others. And the main business of government is to help people who are favorites. Government is for all practical purposes a fraud—it builds up and protects the few at the expense of the public. But people consent to the swindle, and that makes it all right. This consent removes the stigma.

The Christian doctrine has done an immense amount of evil

through dwelling constantly upon the dark side of things and making everything appear so much blacker than it really is. Nothing is a sin, or wrong, or a crime, unless we consider it so. Sin and wickedness and blackness generally is only in ourselves. It is as we see it, as we make it. What the Christians call sin goes with others by another name. So it is evident that it is wholly a matter of opinion. There is no other sin or crime than that which we feel or imagine. So we increase our pains and sorrows by dwelling on them and magnifying them. People delight to talk about *original sin*! But there never was any. If we merely imagine a thing or believe a thing, that of course does not make it so. We imagine that there are ghosts, witches, demons and all such things, but that does not prove that there are any such existences outside of our thoughts.

What governs a man's conduct in life? Not what is taught in his Bible, not what the state orders or directs, but what he believes to be right or necessary, or at least to be calculated to promote his welfare. That and that alone governs a man's action. What a man does is a matter wholly between himself and himself. Change a man's belief and you will change his whole life and being. In no other way can such a result be achieved. Codes never make a man better—they do not govern his conduct, except perhaps in a few particulars. Our Bible is full of rules and commands that nobody observes. After all, the only real master that any man can have is himself. No matter how powerful his oppressor may be, he himself can be free any moment, if he wills. His master might kill him, but he could not take his freedom from him. He could not compel him to obey. People who are not afraid of dying or being injured may always be free.

It is a strange dispensation that we are now living under! If a man has offended us, or if he is in our way, we can do all manner of bad things to him, and it will be all right, according to the prevailing spirit of the times. We can lie about our enemies, we can damage them in various ways, simply because they are not to our liking. It is a monstrous doctrine too well followed! What business is it to us what other people do, or what business is it to them whether we like them or not?

Truth lies at the bottom of a well, and rather a deep well at that. It is like gold. You will never get it, unless you dig for it, and keep digging.

This world is not made of sweets exclusively—there is necessarily a mixture of the bitter that goes with the sweet. It is a pleasant thing to have friends, but in the very nature of the case, if you have friends you must have enemies, for so far as you stand with certain ones you must be against certain other ones. There is no middle ground, and people must be on one side or the other. To be on both sides is quite impracticable.

The most pitiable attitude for any man to assume is that of a suppliant—a suppliant for favors, for money, for assistance. for pardon. A man must have become wretched indeed when he consents to take the part of a suppliant. And still all business at the present day is built up on supplications—"soliciting" is the term used. What is the real difference between soliciting patronage and begging for pennies? When a man solicits in business, he merely wants money.

One of the most serious mistakes that people make, is to suppose that all the bad men are in prison or in jail; or that the men who are in prison or in jail are appreciably worse than those who are on the outside.

If people do not stand up for their rights, stand up bravely and stand up always, they will not be apt to get any rights in this country.

We first pass laws by which to build up trusts, combinations and millionaires, and then we try to get rid of them. It is not so easily done. They are too strongly fortified. But let it not be forgotten that if we had no laws, we should have no trusts nor combines, nor even millionaires. They would be an impossibility.

People are perpetually telling what they would do "if they were in your place!" How do they know what they would do if they were in your place? How could they ever know? Undoubtedly if they were in your place, and if they had the same knowledge of facts, the same character and disposition, and also had the same aims and purposes in view and were subject to the same influences as yourself, they would then do precisely as you do. But duplicates of that kind are never found. Alexander in a similar case made the proper answer to Parmenio when he advised Alexander to accept certain proposals: "So would I, were I Parmenio."



A man of wealth can have a fifty-acre lot to be buried in. But would that make him rest easier? At best he could occupy but one corner. There are innumerable things that millions will not buy—and health and comfort are among the number.

It is not the doing bad that is so bad, but the doing bad and constantly lying about it and trying to hoodwink other people. That is what is so bad in the estimation of mankind. Nobody likes to be fooled.

There are so many people who imagine that they know, and therefore they can tell you, what God wants. There are a great many ministers and pious people who are affected with hallucinations of that kind. Bishop Thoburn, from India, recently testified before the Senate committee in Washington on Philippine affairs. Together with other things that he affirmed positively, we notice this especially: "The American occupation of the Philippines was an act of God!" But how should Bishop Thoburn know? When did he see God last, or when did he converse with him? Has he ever seen God or ever conversed with him? We reckon not. That privilege was denied even to Moses. Moses was favored with a rear view of the Almighty, according to the Bible, but nothing beyond that. "My face shall not be seen," are the words of God as given in Exodus. It is rather late in the day for presuming men to be telling what God said, what God did, and what God wants. They have no acquaintance with God, and so they must know absolutely nothing of his wishes or commands. All such talk is a mere fiction, and the ordinary conception of God is a figment of the human brain. People delude themselves in the first place and then they try to delude others afterward.

What sort of people are they who presume in all the affairs of life to lecture others and point out the short and sure route that leads to life everlasting? Who are the men who assume to be so much wiser and worthier than we are? Who are the men who legislate for us and act as our guides and judges? Who are they who determine for us what is right and what is wrong, and who are the ones that feel privileged to inflict punishment upon us when we happen to be out of order? Who are those kind, Christian people that take such an unbounded interest in our welfare at all times? Strange to say, *they are the commonest people in the world*. Many of them have proved to be failures in the management of their own affairs; many of them are foreigners who have not lived long



enough in this country to be able to speak and write our language intelligibly. These people—our governors, masters, teachers, judges and policemen—are often ignorant, and sometimes willful and perverse. We are led to exclaim with the inspired writer: "What is man that God should be mindful of him?" However, God could not have been greatly concerned about the well-being of mankind, or he would certainly have left their destiny in better hands than it is now found.

Under the Popes there was no thought, no freedom, no inquiry, and of course there was, and there could be, no trouble.

Freedom. But when freedom emerged and the Reformation began, then the trouble commenced at once. Freedom implies contention, conflict, and it exists only on condition that it meets with continued resistance. Freedom is always opposed by that which tends to destroy freedom. When freedom of action ceases to meet with resistance, there is nothing for it to combat, and as a natural consequence it soon goes out of business and disappears.

What should engross the attention of those who desire to be known as worthy and sensible men? Not war, not fame, not high ambition, not money-making, not pleasure-seeking. Study Art. These in themselves are not worthy of the study and devotion of men. The study of music, of art, of color and architecture is far better and brings far more desirable returns than either war, fame or money. Study nature and nature's productions; visit the fields, examine the flowers and gaze upon those wonderful products of time—the trees, the valleys, the hills, the mountains. Cultivate an acquaintance with the birds, and also with the beasts that gather around you. Even the tiniest insect, once understood, will be found to be as deserving of your attention as the most interesting specimen of the human family.

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NOTE.—As intimated before, we have attempted to follow no order in placing the paragraphs of this review. They contain independent propositions and, having no relation to each other, they are incapable of classification. However, they are none the less valuable because of that fact. People will read a paragraph that will not take the trouble to peruse a page or scan consecutive pages. It often happens that the gist of the matter can be fairly set forth in a few lines. In repeated instances in this review the same idea has been presented in different words. The chief aim of the author has been to impress and convince the reader, and to do this successfully, where the thought presented is new, repetitions are necessary. A striking thought will bear being presented anew in any work.

LEADING ARTICLES  
ON  
LIFE'S PROBLEMS.

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CHAPTER I.

RELIGION.

Religious belief has a natural birth and it dies a natural death, disappearing at last like all the rest of earth. Religions do not die in a year or a century. They have their periods of rise and decline, and finally the time comes, as in the case of Paganism, when they cease to exist entirely. The Christian religion has had its rise and, having reached and passed the culminating point, it is now on the decline. And yet it may, and no doubt it will, remain an important factor in the world's history for hundreds of years to come.

We make the common mistake in connection with religion that all peoples who have religions make. We imagine that ours is the first, greatest and really the only true religion that the world has yet produced. But this is a vain, almost a ridiculous assumption. No intelligent, thinking man doubts for a moment that our religion is only one out of a great many religions, some of which are older and have more converts, and some are younger and have fewer converts than ours has. Ours is not the only God there is or ever has been. He is only one out of many, some of which resemble him in many respects and some do not. The Egyptians, Greeks and Romans had a host of gods, and India has multitudes of them to-day. If we turn over the pages of history we shall find that gods have been numerous enough in the past, some of them being far more powerful than the one whom

we adore as our special God. Again, our Bible is not the only book of its kind in the world. It is only one bible out of many. Every sect has a bible of some kind. Even the Mormons have one which was discovered in New York state some years ago. It is very common indeed to find sacred writings and books of revelation. Whether our God is better than other peoples' gods, or whether our Bible is better or worse than the sacred books of other peoples, is a matter of opinion, and we shall not attempt to settle that question just now. As to our plan of salvation and our theory of sin, we do differ very much from any other sect, but there have been many mediators and saviors of men besides Christ, and he was not the only one who was believed to be the son of God. According to Greek and Roman mythology, which is as authentic as bibles usually are, many heroes and some kings were believed to be sons of gods. There is nothing at all anomalous about such a belief.

It happens that we are not left to conjecture on the question of the true character of our Bible. We know, as a matter of history, just how it was made, or where it was found ; or rather, we are not left in doubt as to its true origin. It was not made or found—it *grew*, and it is growing still. Every change that is made in this book—and changes have been numerous enough even in recent times—is a step in its growth. Our Bible is not to-day what it was fifty or a hundred years ago, to say nothing of what it was five hundred or a thousand years ago. And if we go back to the time of Christ, the change would appear still more striking. Christ never saw our Bible. He knew nothing of our Bible—indeed, there was no such book in existence until hundreds of years after Christ's crucifixion.

As we come to get a closer insight into the true nature of religion, we find that it is simply man's conception of the world. It is to some extent the result of the teachings of man, but its direction is largely determined by surroundings and external influences. Every country and every people has its own religion, because it has its own thoughts and its own ideas of nature. As men differ, their religions will differ ; and as times change, both men and religions will change likewise. Besides, every religion is a modification or development of some antecedent religion. It is a well known fact that no religion, no feature, no event of any kind, stands out independent and alone. Nothing is anomalous, nothing is unique. So, before we have law, we must have government to enforce law ; and before we can have government, we must have a well-established belief in some superior being, or we must trust in some religious principles on which government may be founded. Hence it is that in all civilized

countries, religion is fundamental and it is the first thing taught or learned. People who rule can only do so by referring to some authority on which they base their claims; and whence could such authority come, if not from the Supreme Ruler of the universe?

When people enter this world, they find it obscure and mysterious. Among the first things that they do is to ask questions; they seek to know the reason and cause of things, and they immediately rush to the conclusion that there must be found somewhere some great First Cause! To this First Cause they give the name of God. It is well known that all peoples make their own gods, and that gods never make men. God is a pure conception and nothing more, and as conceptions vary in different minds, so gods and religions vary. In a word, religion is simply the result of man's effort to explain the mysteries of this world. Having fashioned his God to suit his own notions, he immediately starts out to imagine or conceive what this God has done and how he proceeded in his operations. The first great performance would naturally be to make the world, and we find as we examine the history of religions, that no two accounts of this world-making agree. The God of the Christians made the world out of nothing—but that method is really quite exceptional, and there are several other methods much better than that.

Tradition helps along wonderfully in the construction of a religion, but mainly it is a work of imagination on the part of the devotee or his teacher. Even though a man gets some information on this point from his ancestors, everything at last must be run through his mind, as a grist goes through the mill, so that it may be fashioned at last in strict accordance with his own peculiar notions of truth and propriety. The ancients had a tendency, seemingly irresistible, to personify the qualities of objects. In fact they did not so much observe the things themselves as they did the qualities of things. If they saw an object move, they naturally formed the conclusion at once that it was impelled through some concealed agency, some spirit. According to the men of other days, spirits, as well as gods, which are nothing more nor less than spirits, are everywhere. From the standpoint of those people, there are no inanimate objects. They never suspected for a moment that because they could not see or hear or touch things, these things did not exist. We do the same thing ourselves, though in a different direction and to a more limited extent. We idolize and deify a host of objects, and because we deify them, we adore them or worship them. We have our goddess of Liberty in the form of a handsome girl. We have our Devil, who has numberless forms and shapes in

which he presents himself, varying in all cases according to the fancy or genius of the individual by whom he is pictured. It must not be forgotten that the Devil is never painted as he really is, but only as he appears to our imagination. He is simply Evil in a personified form—that is all the Devil there is or ever has been. The devils that Luther saw and contended with, like the snakes in the boots of people who have the delirium tremens, were creatures of the imagination. We have Cupid still, as the Greeks and Romans had the same god. We paint angels and give them shapes which vary according to the fertility of our imagination. We have Christ also whom we deify and idolize; and the Catholics have a multitude of lesser divinities, among them being the saints and the Virgin Mary. Really, we have as much idolatry in the present age as people had four thousand years ago—though the habiliments are different and the forms presented appear more or less diversified. We personify war, nature, time, the seasons, virtue, goodness, especially in poetry, and we treat them in all respects as if we were addressing sentient beings. Did the Greeks and Romans go any farther? If not, why should we condemn them for their idolatry, or complain of them because of the gods they chose to worship?

But there was a vast difference between the nature and purposes of the Greek religion and the nature and purposes of the Christian religion. The Greeks had a great multitude of divinities, perhaps 30,000 in all. Each one had his or her especial department. For them, there was no real god of the universe—there was no god for the Greek people specially, as opposed to the gods of other people. Jupiter was indeed father and king, but he was not the supreme ruler. He was not the only heavenly king. He was neither omnipotent nor omnipresent. He was a department god; he had the air and the earth for his especial care, while Neptune was god of the sea, and Pluto presided over the infernal regions.

With the ancient Greeks, religion was the pure and honest worship of celestial powers. They looked upon certain gods as their protectors and benefactors, and it was natural that they should seek to appease these deities by offering to them services and sacrifices. All religions are based upon the principle of fear, and the religion of the ancients was certainly no exception in this regard. Their whole worship was an effort to propitiate deities whose favors they desired or whose wrath they dreaded. The state was also interested in this worship of the gods—as states always are—and the theory was that the state would suffer damage for the shortcomings or misdoings of the people in connection with the worship of the gods. Thus, the state was



regarded solely as a source of protection for both the public and the individual. With man in his relations to other men, the state did not interfere. Neither did religion interfere with private affairs. Whether a man had performed his whole duty to the gods, and indirectly to the state, was the sole question raised in regard to his conduct. The religion of the ancients had nothing to do with ethics. There was no code of morals emanating from that source. There were no sacred writings, no scriptures, no written laws. There was only the controlling influence of custom and tradition in this direction. The ancients, it will be remembered, revered and adored their ancestors who were really the original gods. The case is very different to-day; our people have but little use for their ancestors, either those of a remote or those of a recent date, and they care very little indeed about the lessons to be learned from the experience of the past.

Laws for the ancients were made not by gods but by men—by such esteemed personages as Homer, Solon, Lycurgus, Socrates, Plato, Pericles and Aristotle. There was no sham or pretence in those days; things were found to be what they seemed to be. Hypocrisy as a growth belongs to a later age—sham and shoddy are comparatively of recent date. These men that we have named were regarded as the interpreters of nature, and what they taught was accepted by the people as the undoubted truth. People in those days had confidence in their leading men and they were willing to concede that such men were wiser than themselves.

In the religion of the ancients, there were no designs upon the state, and there were no complaints on either side about encroachments that were not warranted. Each class kept within its own realm. Politics, as well as philosophy, was considered to be something that had no connection with the dogmas or doctrines of religion.

The Greeks and Romans, and the ancients generally, did not have religion in the sense in which we at the present day understand that term. They did not look to religion to discover moral laws which were to govern men in the conduct of life. Morality, as already intimated, came from custom, from tradition and from the rules laid down by the fathers. Of the world to come they knew little, and for it they cared less. They lived for this world, and they gave themselves no concern about their fate when they reached the other side. They did not believe in immortality as we do; so they had no Messiah to worship and they embraced no doctrine of salvation. They worshiped their ancestors because they did not really consider them dead; and while the latter had crossed the river, as they knew, they believed

that they still retained an interest in the affairs of the living and that to a certain extent they had control over their fate. If they had thought that their fathers were really dead, they would not have worshiped them as they did daily. All the use which the Greeks and Romans had for their gods was found in the services which they imagined that the latter could render them in this life. They believed in no heaven or hell in our sense; their heaven and hell were in this world, and their gods, though invisible, were their daily companions. Such gods were worth having. Their divinities were far more sensible and more serviceable to men than our God who is omnipresent and hence is never in any one particular place when he is wanted. The only god that really deserves to be worshiped is one who can always be found when he is needed.

The religion of the Egyptians was not materially different from the religions of the Greeks and Romans. In fact it was the parent of both. Like these races, the Egyptians believed in the survival of the dead and in the actual continuance of life in this world. They knew nothing of a resurrection; for those who are not dead, no resurrection is needed. All these nations believed that the gods directed the every-day affairs of the people, and so they consulted the oracles and auguries to see what they had better do in a certain contingency. They were ready to abandon at once any undertaking, if they happened to find that the omens were not favorable. They believed, as we do, in signs and luck, though to a much greater extent.

### CHRISTIANITY.

In entering upon an inquiry into the history and development of Christianity, the first fact to be borne in mind is that the Christian religion owes very little of its present form and characteristics to the teachings of our Saviour. As a reformer his career was brief, and so far as his teachings are concerned, their influence upon the world must be considered small indeed. Very little of what Christ said or taught has been treasured up, and the evidence in regard to the authenticity of what he is reported to have said, is, to say the least, very unsatisfactory. He wrote nothing himself, and we must wait till we come down to Paul's time before we have anything reliable in this connection. In fact the Christian religion may be said to date from Paul as the real founder, rather than from Christ himself who merely gave his name to a sect and poured out his blood to save a portion of mankind. Paul, it will be remembered, wrote and taught some time after Christ, and he never saw the Saviour.

The Mahometan religion had the Koran on which to rear its proud structure. The Koran contained the doctrines of Mahomet, and in this book they were clearly enunciated. The religion of Zoroaster was also founded upon scriptures that are still read and admired even by those who are not converts to that belief. So there are the written teachings of Buddha in India and of Confucius in China. It is by no means anomalous to find the Christian religion founded upon the teachings of one or more men. In fact all religions, when fully understood, will be found to have their origin in the agency of man.

When we speak of the Christian religion, we mean the Christian religion as men know it, see it and understand it to-day—and not as it was known and seen and understood ten, twenty or a hundred years ago. But what it is to-day is not what it was in Christ's time, nor even what it was when Paul died. The fact should never be overlooked or forgotten that Christianity is a product of twenty centuries of growth, and each succeeding day it is somewhat different from what it was the day before. So that when we assume to speak of Christianity, the question that properly arises is this: What Christianity is meant? Of what age, what sect, what form? The whole world has contributed to make Christianity what we find it to-day. It is simply one of Time's latest and most important achievements. Of course Christ and his disciples did much to give birth to this new faith, and Paul and his followers did still more. Very much has been done to give it character and standing by decrees of councils, rulings of popes and edicts of kings. The dreams or visions of saints and divines have had a great influence upon the character and form of Christianity, and in many instances the views of those holy men have been incorporated with the sacred writings and have become a part of the divine law.

As already intimated, only a little, a very little, of what we recognize as Christianity to-day came from Christ, or even from Paul. Our holy Sabbath, on which we place such great stress, is not based upon what Christ or Paul taught, but upon a decree of the Emperor Constantine, a potentate who was a Christian only by conversion, and that at a very late day in his earthly career. Does any one imagine that if Christ or Paul came down to dwell among our people at the present day, he would recognize the Christian religion as something he had known or heard of in the remote past? Most assuredly not. It would take either Christ or Paul several years to learn the mysteries and peculiarities of our religion as we have it at the present time. We apprehend that they would both feel anything but at home among our latter-day Christians. What would most surprise

and amaze them, we think, would be the odd way we have of worshipping God in our churches on Sunday.

It must also be remembered that there are a great many different forms and phases of Christianity—as many forms and phases, indeed, as there are sects and sections, nay, as many forms and phases as there are individuals who profess this belief. How unreasonable it is to speak of *a* Christian religion or *the* Christian religion, as if there were only one! Which form shall we take as a standard? Which is the only true and acceptable Christianity of all the different kinds that we find in our midst? Is it the Protestant form or the Catholic form; is it the Methodist phase or the Baptist phase, is it the Greek church or the Latin church? Which is it? They cannot all present the true form of the Christian religion, though that is what they all pretend. To the writer, one form seems to be as good and as true as the other, and no one of them is quite what it ought to be.

Now let us inquire farther: How did Christianity spread? How did it ever come, from such feeble beginnings, to acquire such a remarkable power on earth as we find that it now possesses? As already seen, it was a product of slow and steady growth. It made its appearance at an opportune moment, as everything does that is valuable and lasting. It came just as the Roman empire was on its decline and when the people had wearied of slavery, superstition and sacrifices. It came when the whole civilized world had become disgusted with Paganism, with all its trickery and deception. All decent people of that day abhorred its baseness and its pollution, and they were looking for something better in its stead. There was much to appeal to the hearts of the common people in the so-called teachings of Christ. It gave them consolation and comfort where they had found only sufferings and sorrows before. If there was no relief from the tyranny of their oppressors in this world, there was relief in the land of promise just on the other side of Jordan. Only a few years, perhaps a few weeks, or a few days, and then they would be accepted of Jesus and rejoice forever! Wonderful conception, beautiful indeed the thought—if a person could only rely upon the realization of such a splendid dream! However, it answered a want and satisfied the yearning of the down-trodden masses of those days—and *that is how it came that Christianity has risen and spread as it has done down to the present day.* Christianity was a political rather than a religious innovation.

At first, and for a long time, even for centuries, Christianity was a doctrine accepted only by the poor, the feeble, the sorrowing and the afflicted. Christianity in its inception was the poor man's religion—and even to-day the rich and the powerful have



little use for any of Christ's teachings. They go to church occasionally, it is true, but merely as a matter of form, or perhaps through pride. The rich have always liked Paganism better, with its pomp, parade and splendor. But truth is mighty and will prevail. All it wants is time, and so it was with Christianity which was truth for the time being. At first kings and emperors tried punishment and persecution, instruments which such people have always at command and are prompt to apply; but these remedies are never effective, and they certainly did not succeed in this instance. The more bitterly and more relentlessly the Christians were persecuted, the more numerous and more powerful they became. The people finally triumphed, and the monarchs themselves had to succumb. These rulers, having changed from opposers, finally became converts themselves; or they pretended to be converts, because they wished to be with the people and have themselves arrayed on the popular side. They accepted the forms at least of the new religion, if they did not endorse its doctrines in fact. From this time on, the alliance between the church and the state went on apace, and this union has continued down to the present moment.

By this alliance with the state, the church gained in power, but it lost in character. In its primitive purity, Christianity, as Christ and Paul had taught its doctrines, disappeared forever. In the hands of kings and court people Christianity became, as we might expect, merely a modified Paganism, and so it has remained down to the present day. It will be conceded by every intelligent inquirer that all the parade and processions, all the splendor, all the sacrifices, the libations and the ceremonies that are found to-day connected in any form with the worship of the Almighty God belong most emphatically to Paganism.

The state, all over the civilized world, makes use of the church simply as an instrument with which to carry out its unholy projects and purposes. Cast your eye slowly and carefully over the Christian nations of the world at this time, and you will find the church tenderly gathered under the wing of the state in every instance, and the state itself profiting by the high character which the church lends to the combination. It will be remembered that Christ and Paul would have nothing to do with the state and government, and the early Christians for at least three hundred years took the same ground. But latter-day Christians, we are sorry to say, take an entirely different view of the matter. They find a great deal of good in the state, and they can hardly get enough of it. Indeed, what could this ill-matched couple do without each other, the state without the church, or the church without the state? They would both go down in



short order. The state would be destitute of any rightful claim, and the church would be without even a semblance of power. The state is founded on the church; the church is founded on the Bible; and the Bible is founded on tradition! No wonder the foundations of the state totter. It is well known that every man who is a ruler maintains his position only so long as he represents God, and only so far as he can prove that his credentials come direct from that heavenly source. A state without a church would be a monstrosity; and a church without a state to give it support, protection and prestige, would be a nonentity.

In this connection we may consider farther the question as to how Europe became christianized. In the early centuries, notably the second, third and fourth, many Christians fled from persecution in Rome and Italy and settled in the country of the Gauls and Germans. They became missionaries, spreading the new doctrine among those who were known at that time as barbarians, and they were very successful in making converts. It was not long before the new faith had gained quite a following; and after the conversion of Emperor Constantine, and Christianity had become established in Rome, bishops were settled in Gaul, and the old Pagan belief, even in those remote regions, began slowly to decline. Monasteries were established not only in Gaul but in Great Britain, and the work of conversion went on, chiefly through missionaries, not only in those countries, but among the Saxons and Germans.

But the first great progress that was made by Christianity in Europe was under Charlemagne, king of the Franks, in the eighth and ninth centuries. Charlemagne must be looked upon as the real founder of Christianity in Europe—one of the greatest Christianizers and civilizers that the world has yet known. Like Alexander the Great and Mahomet, he was a conqueror; he had but one instrument with which to enforce his ideas, and that was the sword. His mission, like that of all conquerors, was to kill and exterminate his enemies; and the only remedy that he knew for the evils of the world was to remove all those that did not gather themselves under his banner. It is a surprising fact that all religions make their principal progress in this way. It is not pretended that killing a man really converts him, but his sudden disappearance has a very perceptible effect upon the minds of those who survive. This was Mahomet's method, and it proved to be remarkably successful. People have short memories, and after they have once been converted, they soon forget how it happened.

Charlemagne was a barbarian, a rough and cruel messenger of fate. On one side he pushed back the followers of Mahomet,

and on the other side he crushed the Saxons. He disciplined and Christianized all with whom he came in contact, but at a fearful cost. He was a terrible master, a merciless conqueror. The number of Saxon prisoners that he killed in one day is reported to have been 4,500. This is an exemplification of the means by which the Christian religion was enabled to gain a foothold in Europe.

Charlemagne aided the Pope, and the Pope aided Charlemagne in return—fair sample, it was, of the church and state as we uniformly find them associated. Pope Leo III. placed a crown upon the monarch's head and gave him the proud name of Charles Augustus, Emperor of the Romans! It is evident enough that Christ never dreamed of any such alliance as that which we have under consideration—a union of his followers with the robbers and murderers of the world. Charles led the advance in this direction, and in the example that he set, he has no doubt been imitated a thousand times since. Union of the church and state—sometimes differing on minor points, and sometimes even entering into contention, *but always remaining allies and loyal to each other to the last*. Neither seems to forget for a moment that the one is absolutely indispensable to the other.

Charlemagne built great temples—and one which he considered grand was located at his home in Aix-la-Chapelle. It stands there yet, a queer shaped building having an octagonal form on the inside; and not far away from the church is the statue of Charles in the public square in front of the City Hall, where the palace originally stood. History speaks of Charlemagne, as it does of most monarchs, as of more than ordinary stature and of a noble and commanding appearance. But the statue of Charlemagne to-day represents him as rather short and stoop-shouldered, and in appearance anything but imposing. Whether it is the fault of Charles Augustus himself or of the sculptor, we are not able to say. He holds out a small globe in his hand as if he were making an offering to some one. Louis XIV. was also represented as a big man, though when he died and his clothes were removed, he was found to be not so grand after all. Clothes help a king along in appearance amazingly. Indeed, clothes are the biggest half of most monarchs. If there ever was a case with but a single step from the sublime to the ridiculous, it is in the case of the transition from a monarch in his robes to the man as nature made him.

But without reference to the stature of Charles, there is no question at all about the fact that his crimes exceeded all ordinary proportions. He was a bold, bad man, and if he was saved, there is hope for other rascals. He furnished a type that has

been repeated in history many, many times since. Everything and anything, no matter how cruel or how wicked, if it were only done for God and the church! So it has ever been; and so it is to-day, though to a less extent. Like most bad men, Charlemagne did a great deal of good, but whether that is to be counted to his credit, is a matter about which there is some question. Quite certain it is, we cannot justly call a man good simply because he occasionally does a good deed. A truly good man is one who is good without intermission, who does no bad deeds at any time, and who is incapable of wickedness under any circumstances.

In this connection we quote a paragraph from Herder's *Philosophy of History*: How were conquered peoples converted to the Christian religion in the early ages? "Often through fire and sword, through secret tribunals and exterminating wars. Let no one say that the Roman bishop did not occasion these things; he approved of them, enjoyed their fruits, and whenever he could, he imitated them. Hence those courts of Inquisition, at which psalms were sung, and those Crusades for conversion, in the booty of which popes, princes, orders, lords and priests participated. Those who were not killed became slaves and they remain such to this day. So has Christian Europe been founded. So kingdoms were established, consecrated as they were by the pope; and later on the cross of Christ was carried as a murder-sign into distant parts of the world." And, sad to say, this is all true, being only a portion of the truth at that.

#### MAHOMETANISM.

Christianity and Mahometanism, two branches of one and the same religion, are in every essential respect different systems from those that prevailed in Greece and Rome. The ancients were polytheistic, and they were exceedingly tolerant toward other religions. But the Christians and Mahometans believe in one God, who is their God exclusively, and they insist that all other gods are spurious and contemptible. Their doctrine is that there is no God but Allah—Christ being the prophet for one branch and Mahomet for the other. There is no material difference between the doctrines of our Old Testament and the doctrines of Mahometanism, except that the latter is of later date and has Mahomet for its prophet. Both systems are Semitic in character, and naturally they are adapted to the wants and tastes of the Semitic peoples. Both religions are intensely aggressive, and the power, finally, upon which they both depend is the sword. The Christian religion as we recognize it began with

wars and conquests precisely as was done by Mahomet and his followers. Their aim was, and to a certain extent is to-day, to subdue the world and force it to accept their own particular creed. All races who refused to submit and who would not worship this one God, Allah, were infidels, and as such they must be persecuted and finally destroyed. That is the spirit that moves both Mahometans and Christians, even in this progressive and enlightened age of ours. Their motto is conversion or extermination. If we hear less of these things now than we did in the time of the Inquisition, it is simply because we hear less of Christianity itself, and people find other things more interesting and of greater importance.

Mahometanism, like Christianity, is founded on written law. Both have a Bible—sacred writings filled with dogmas and ordinances which the faithful are determined to have enforced upon mankind, even if the effort costs their lives. These systems are properly the foundation of modern government and the original source of state law. It is well known that our state authority is established wholly upon religious authority. Mahometanism will be better understood if we regard it in its true light, as an off-shoot of the Jewish religion.

These two religions, Christianity and Mahometanism, are founded upon the basis of authority, and their sacred books are made up substantially of commands and ordinances. The believers in these doctrines assume the infallibility of their God, and upon that foundation they build their whole structure—they are right and everybody else is wrong, they are pure and good, and everybody else is sinful. It is merely an ingenious system by which men are converted into slaves of God in the first place, and into slaves of men afterward. Their slavery to God is a delusion, but slavery to men is a painful reality. It is "benevolent assimilation" put into successful operation. The doctrine amounts to this: "You do as I say, sacrifice to me, love me, worship me, and I will engage to protect you." To this the feeble creature cheerfully assents, and he sells his poor misguided soul for *a mere promise which is never fulfilled*. Behold the origin of our present state! If we did not have our Holy Bible and the Koran, we do not believe that men would ever have thought of having a state and a government. Certain it is, all the states now in existence in civilized lands are founded upon doctrines taught in these two books. The type, the arch-ruler, the father of all our despots, is Allah. Humility, blind obedience and sacrifice are perpetually enjoined as the sole medium of salvation. Such a system of religion is opposed to all reason, and it ought not to be a cause of wonder that men of sense and intelligence at



the present time should generally reject these doctrines, in whole or in part, and that the closer they examine the subject and the more they revolve the question in their minds, the more determined they should become in this rejection.

As already noticed, our Bible, like the Koran, is made up substantially of commands, except that large portion which is devoted to ancient history; but all commands are valueless and destitute of power. We have the doctrine of force taught in one part of the Bible, and the blessed doctrine of love without force in another. It is evident enough that this house is divided against itself, and therefore it cannot stand forever. Curiously indeed, we follow the Old Testament in practice and the New Testament in theory. Our state is founded wholly upon the Old Testament, and the doctrines of the New Testament are practically ignored. Men to-day worship not the God of Love but the God of Wrath and Revenge. Just where God ends and where the Devil starts in, it is rather hard to decide.

#### SALVATION.

The doctrine of divine grace and redemption as it has developed in connection with the Christian religion is well worth the serious consideration of every thoughtful person. How shall a man be saved? How shall he escape the just penalty of the sins he has committed? Not by his good works, not by his sacrifices, not by his propitiatory acts of any kind; for it is clearly seen that after a sin is committed, there is no remedy and no known contrivance by which a man can escape the just penalty of his transgressions. This is nature's law, as well as God's law. If a man is rash enough to jump over a precipice, he must expect to suffer the consequences of his folly. After the penalty is incurred, there can be no remedy, no preventative of anykind. If a man violates the laws of health, he must expect to suffer for his temerity. Prayers will avail him not, neither will propitiatory acts or sacrifices of any character.

But the New Testament teaches a new and strange doctrine in this connection, and one that it is hard for a reasoning and reflecting man to accept. That men have sinned, and must sin, is conceded to be true; and if they have sinned, there is no known method of escaping the penalty incurred. This was the doctrine that prevailed throughout the world up to the time of Christ, over nineteen hundred years ago. It is the doctrine still held among men who reflect and whose belief is formed according to the principles that are accepted as sound at the present day. But since the coming of Christ, we have a new faith, a new doc-



trine taught. It had been granted that when penalties are incurred, the judgment must be carried out without any possibility of escape to the sinner. But now there comes an innovation that has no parallel in the history of the world. God comes forward, and for some unaccountable reason he abandons the part that he has taken all along—that of the just and inexorable judge—and he takes the burden of man's sins upon his own shoulders! He had already entered judgment in the case, and declared the penalty incurred by the sinner, but from the year one, over nineteen centuries since, he started out in an entirely new direction and adopted a new plan of action. Mystery of mysteries! What did he propose to do? Why, he proposed to relieve men from the penalty already incurred, and for the sins that had been committed he offered to take the burden, the blame and the suffering, upon himself. *Mirabile!* Was there ever a judge like that before?

But, we regret to say, the facts hardly support the theory that has been advanced in this case. God, the Father, did not really sacrifice himself, and perhaps he never pretended that he would—there is an evident misunderstanding about this business somewhere. Such a course would have been inexplicable. But as a matter of fact, it was not the father that was sacrificed for the sins of man, as has been so often stated, but his only begotten son. That was quite another thing, and not so very remarkable nor so very anomalous. Things of that kind have happened before, and they will no doubt happen again. Fathers have repeatedly offered up their sons as a sort of atonement for the blunders that they, the fathers, had committed in their early career. But what could have been God's motive—for even gods have motives? In this case the incentive seems to have been love. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. But did he love the world as a whole, or only a certain part of it? No, God did not love the whole world—such is not the nature of love in any case. God only loved a few chosen and favored ones. He loved those that loved and served him, and he hated the remainder. He did not sacrifice for all the world, but for this particular few who constituted a sort of select party acting on their own account. *Such is love uniformly.* God's love in this case was by no means disinterested.

But we must judge of the sacrifice of Christ as we would judge of any sacrifice in every-day life. Was it just, was it rational? Is there anything natural or reasonable about the whole story? No, it was not just, neither was it rational in any respect. It was not even possible, and such a thing evidently could never have happened. Every sacrifice is unjust and irra-

tional, and the sacrifice of Christ is remarkably so. To make so pure a being as Christ suffer as the scape-goat to save the wicked beings of this world from the penalty which they had incurred, is a monstrous case of cruelty and injustice, and mankind should cease to regard it as an event that really belongs to the history of this world. It is not a desirable picture to present to the view of men. When people come to witness an exhibition of wrongdoing too frequently, they finally fail to see any harm in the performance. If God sacrificed his son, his only son, why should not other fathers sacrifice their sons, especially in an emergency? It is not well to sacrifice even a lamb, first, because it is cruel to the lamb, and second, because sacrifices do no good to any one save those who partake of the feast. If lambs were not good to eat, there would not be so many "sacrificed." We are glad to state that the prevailing sentiment to-day is not in favor of the practice of punishing the innocent in order that the guilty may escape.

Many people to-day, perhaps most people, doubt whether there is or ever has been any saving or redeeming power in the blood of Christ. The whole thought is oriental, a pure fiction that finds little response in the hearts of intelligent people at the present time. However, like many other fictions, it has served its purpose, and it has had a wonderful influence upon the history of man. Such a story started to-day would find but few believers.

It is now generally understood and agreed that vicarious suffering, either of the innocent for the guilty or of the guilty for the innocent, does not answer the purpose in any case. Indeed, sensible men do not believe in the efficacy of sacrifice under any circumstances. They do not believe in the need or propriety of punishments to start with. If a man sins, that is, if he violates any provision or disregards any condition of nature, he must suffer for his error in his own person. It is not an age in which scape-goats flourish—they are certainly neither numerous nor popular. The penalty and the transgression must go together—they are inseparable. There is no interval of time to distinguish one from the other.

And now let us inquire into the true nature and workings of grace. Grace can never be just. It is partiality, favoritism, and discrimination exhibited in a most repulsive form. It is not doing as we ought to be done by. It is punishing one man and allowing another man equally guilty to escape without punishment. It is not bringing all persons under one general and immutable law. It is offering a premium for wrongdoing, since no matter how sinful a man's conduct may be, he is saved because some one else has atoned for his sins. It is contrary to all

the rules and revelations of nature that such should be the case.

Grace is founded upon a theory of slavery. If men are submissive, obedient, humble, they will be favored, they will be pardoned. Otherwise they must suffer. But who wants to be a slave, who wants to be obligated by the favors of anybody? A free and independent man does not desire grace, does not want pardon, because he feels that he has done no wrong in the first place. He wants simple fairness and justice—nothing more. A bold, brave man does not want assistance; he can help himself. Moreover, he never does what he is ashamed of at any time.

And what can grace effect in any case? It can heal no wounds; it cannot help either the sinner or the one who has suffered injury at his hands. Nothing can heal wounds but time and nature. Grace certainly cannot remove the sinfulness of sin; it cannot change its character in the slightest degree. Nature has no scape-goats. A man can send a substitute to war, but nature accepts nothing of the kind.

There are many serious, even fatal, defects in the Christian scheme of salvation. Carried to its legitimate consequences, it is pernicious in its influence. The true doctrine would seem to be that a man should so live that he might have no need of salvation. If a man commits no offence, he has no need of being saved from punishment, since he has incurred no penalty. He is a free man, and having done no wrong, he has placed himself under obligations to no one, and therefore he needs no redemption. But the Christian doctrine in the direction which it takes is quite different. It would seem to imply that there is some merit in sin, or at least that it is unavoidable, and therefore it is excusable. According to the Christian dispensation, what inducement is there for a man to be just and kind and wise? Why should he strive to do good works? Following the teachings of Christ and Paul, and of the New Testament generally, with Luther's testimony thrown in on the same side, there is no value in good works. Faith, according to these authorities, not works, is the principal thing. "By grace ye are saved, not of works, *lest any man should boast.*" Eph. II., 8-9. That is the point exactly, "*lest any man should boast,*" that is, take some credit to himself and presume to be a man! A doctrine that does not keep a man down and make him a good, obedient slave, to God in the first place, and to his governors and rulers in the second place, is not good Bible doctrine at any time. Religion binds, the word itself means to bind; and it is nothing if it does not keep people in bondage. The idea that a man should do anything to save himself—the *only way certainly by which he ever can*

*be saved*—is rejected with symptoms not only of indignation but even of wrath. A high biblical authority says: "Faith stands opposed to all works"—and that is most assuredly the case. If a man undertakes to work out his own salvation by doing as a sensible and worthy man should, he shows clearly enough that he has lost faith in God and gone to another doctor. By the way, nothing is more grasping, more exacting, more suspicious than faith, especially Christian faith. Faith wants converts, faith wants power. Hence it is that heresy is treated by faith as high treason. Heresy leads to reduced numbers in the church, and this to a loss of power and perquisites. Examine any religion carefully, and especially the Christian religion, and you will find that the chief efforts of the church at all times *center upon an increase of power*. Is it any wonder that the Christian peoples are as a whole emphatically money-making peoples? They seek wealth in order to acquire power.

It is a great mistake indeed to suppose for a moment that good morals, or good conduct generally, comes from the Bible, even from the New Testament. As we have stated before, a man was not to be saved by his good works. It was assumed in the beginning that man was born wicked, and, on account of original sin, he must always remain wicked. Evil was believed to be something both necessary and proper. Indeed, we have a right to infer that if evil is necessary under God's reign, it must be proper. Christians rather seem to cultivate evil and glory in it, very much as the criminal courts do in regard to crimes. If there were no crimes, we should have no criminal courts, and if we had no evil to contend with, Christians would speedily go out of business. Before a man can be saved, the first condition is that he must be a sinner, and the more he is steeped in sin, the more certain he may be of ultimately wearing a crown and sitting at the right hand of God. Faith, humility, *obedience*—these are the heavenly virtues; character is nothing. The question is not what you do, but whom do you acknowledge as God? Whom do you worship? To which side are you loyal? Again, we repeat, goodness, in theory at least, has nothing to do with a man's being a good Christian, as it has nothing to do with a man's being a good citizen. A man is not good because he is a Christian in any case; neither is he a Christian because he is good. There is no relation between the two.

The terribly weak spot in Christianity, as in Mahometanism, is FATALISM—*men must be bad*, they must be miserable, *and they could not be good or even comfortable if they tried!* But we know that this assumption is not founded in fact. Everybody knows that there are plenty of good men outside of the church, as well



as in the church, though we are willing to admit that the church has nothing to do with the matter in either case. We note here another serious mistake made by most men. They think that Christianity must be good because there are good things in the Bible. So it is imagined generally that a people are good because the laws under which they live are good. Is a man good because he obeys a good law—or a good master? Most certainly not. There is no virtue in obedience—rather the contrary. There is virtue in resistance, but none in obedience. Cowards are always submissive! It must be remembered that there is absolutely no power in a command, more than there is in a spot of ink or a puff of wind. The character of laws, either those which are human or those which are divine, affords no proof of what the people are who recognize the laws. A law may be recognized, and yet not be obeyed. The most of our laws, those of God as well as those of men, are disregarded. The only laws that have any influence upon a man's conduct are those which he himself makes for himself. The people as a mass never have the privilege of making laws, but in vetoing or negating laws, they are remarkably successful. *In fact no man ever obeys any law unless he chooses.*

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By way of review of what has been said on this subject, we may call attention to a few points in order to enable the reader to get a clearer insight into the nature and workings of religion and finally to understand its development. The source from which religion is derived must be evident enough to every thoughtful person. It is a growth, a product which it has taken ages to mature, and in no sense is it a creation. It is derived from three leading sources: fear, ignorance and imagination. Instead of coming from a single source, from God as is claimed, it comes from an indefinite number of sources, a fact that is rendered evident by the number and variety of religions found upon the earth, as well as by their continued change and development in each individual case. If religion came from Heaven, or from any supernatural source, it would never change. It would be perfect from the beginning. It would be uniform in character, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. That men do alter and amend their religions constantly, and even abandon them entirely, when it comes to the last stage, is a fact that is in evidence every day. If men did not themselves make, contrive and construct their own religion, they would never think of



mending it as they do and putting something different in its stead.

No, there can be no possible mistake about this matter : Religion is born in the minds of men, and it is developed by their imaginations. It is seen by them as in a dream or vision, and no two peoples ever have the same dream or the same vision. All peoples have interpreters and prophets and medicine-men of their own, and they each give a different interpretation to the signs and appearances that are presented to their view. Some people have many gods, some have a few, and others have none at all. The form and features of no two gods belonging to any two peoples, it must be added, are ever painted, figured or described alike.

Religion is the interpretation which man gives to nature's phenomena, and especially to the mysteries of creation. Every people, especially in their early days, have their medicine-men, their bards or poets, their singers and their prophets who make it their business to preserve, repair and reform the traditions of their ancestors. Before we had history and the printing press, we had bards and singers, whose office and employment it was to keep alive among the people the memories of the past. They expressed in verse what the people themselves had come to believe. Behold the true origin of religion!—poetry, songs, tradition, with quite a bit of ancient history added and handed down to posterity. This is what we find, and all that we find, in our own Bible—a confused mass of tradition and allegory.

Religion, unquestionably, was not designed originally to reform men or guide them, but merely, as we have intimated, to interpret the signs and to indicate to men the medicine that they should take, the ceremonies they must observe and the sacrifices they must bring in order to avert evil and ensure success in the enterprises which they have in view. That is all there is of the essence of religion as it is found all over the world. Primitive peoples are excessively timid and apprehensive, like the animals found in the forest, and they want protection against evil and remedies to be used when emergencies arise. Such people are always worshipping the gods ; they are trying some kind of a remedy or going through some sort of performance in order to appease the deities and escape some threatened disaster. We are acting upon the same principle to-day in another direction. Men have great confidence in signs, charms and enchantments, and they are amazingly fond of medicine—medicine for this and medicine for that, medicine all the time ! This shows how foolish and superstitious some people still are. They really believe that it is through the doses that come

from the apothecary shop that God works his miracles at the present moment. Many people actually believe that if they can get some unusually offensive drug into their stomachs, they are pretty sure to be cured in short order. Originally people went to the priest when they were sick, but now they go to the doctor or send for his medicine. The doctor has become far more potent than the priests ever were, and he makes a great deal more money out of the business than they ever did. Formerly men sacrificed to the priests; now they sacrifice to the doctor.

After religion came to be an established institution, designing men soon found that it could be turned to their advantage in various ways. The priests had their plans and they were not slow to perceive their opportunities. They soon saw that the more sacrifices there were, the more feasts they themselves would enjoy. Is it at all strange that priests always encourage sacrifices? Nothing could be more natural than such a course on their part. The men of state also perceived that religion afforded a powerful lever for the management and control of men, and they soon found it to their advantage to take the church under their fostering care. The church wanted protection and the state wanted favors—hence the holy alliance between the church and state which exists even to-day. They are able, unquestionably, to be of great service to each other. There is a natural affinity between the Pope and the king; both are sovereigns, and they are very much alike. Both want power, and both are human, intensely human.

It is to be noticed that every religion is merely a continuation, a development, of some antecedent belief—with a change here and there, and occasionally a new idea added. A really new and unheard-of religion has never yet been known. Surely Christianity was not new, neither was Mahometanism new. Both are new only as a matter of form and as a curious combination of notions. Every religion is the work of interpreters and artists—men who put things in shape and present simply their own views or conceptions of things. All creeds are patchwork, like a crazy quilt. All that is ethical in religions comes from editors, prophets and lawgivers, like Solon, Lycurgus, Confucius and men of their class. Whichever way we turn in our inquiries into the origin, nature and workings of religion, we find men—always men, *but never God*. If there is such a being as God, to this day he has succeeded in eluding the vigilance of his pursuers and escaping into the dismal depths of the unknown. But instead of searching for God and inquiring into his nature and habits, why should men not determine first that there is a God?

In closing our inquiry into the character and influence of

Christianity, we must remark upon its failure to meet the wants of civilized men. So far as the teachings of Christ are concerned, they had no relation to such a condition of society as we find at present; and it is little they could do towards guiding men in society or securing for them a contented and happy life. It should not be forgotten for a moment that for Christ the kingdom of God was near at hand, and that hence there was no need of providing for the morrow. In such a country as Palestine, at such a time as that in which Christ lived, with the world soon to come to an end, the life of a loungee was as proper as any other. There is no sense in people's working unless it is necessary, and in that case labor was not necessary. But such a course in such a land as ours, at this stage of the world, would land a man at no distant day either in jail or the poorhouse. For us, in this age, the Bible is not a reliable director or guide—it is no guide at all. If we wish to learn how we must do, or what we must do, to be saved—that is to say, how we may succeed in life—we must turn for counsel in some other direction and consult some other physician.

Christianity is emphatically ascetic in all its teachings and tendencies. *It is a religion of suffering and sorrow*—most unnecessarily and unreasonably so. Enjoyment, ease, comfort, contentment is wicked, and the route on which these things are found leads down directly to purgatory and destruction. This is the true Christian doctrine, not only in theory but in practice; and if we want the proof, we have only to turn to Christianity as it was found in the Middle Ages from the fifth to the fifteenth centuries. We hear less of this asceticism now, because we hear less about religion of any kind, Christianity having now entirely lost its power over the ordinary citizen. According to true Christianity, everything is bad and everybody is bad. Things were bad in the beginning, and they have remained so ever since. According to the Bible, especially the New Testament, the Devil is a bigger god than the Almighty, and he is by far the more successful in accomplishing what he undertakes. Why should people not worship the Devil? Very many do.

Of course, if you make up your mind at the start that everything is bad and you keep talking about it continually, you will soon succeed in making yourself believe that things really are all awry; and to believe that things are bad is, for you, precisely the same in effect as if they actually were so. Who shall estimate the misery produced in the world by an unfounded belief, like our Christian doctrine, in which the necessity and unavoidable-ness of human suffering and sacrifice is constantly inculcated? *All our misery comes from belief.* If we believe we are un-

happy and must be unhappy, why, most assuredly, we shall be, and we ought to be, unhappy. How could we be otherwise, *since, as we have said, all suffering and sorrow comes from belief?* If we shut ourselves up in darkness or refuse to open our eyes to the glorious light of the sun which shines for all, why should not the world appear dark and dismal to us in all its aspects, and continue so forever? Sunshine is made for those only who open their eyes and for those who are both able and willing to see.

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## CHAPTER II.

### TRUTH AND THOUGHTS.

Truth is something that we pick up by the way, retain for a time, and finally becoming tired of it, we drop it and take something else that pleases us better.

Truth is what men believe ; everything for them is simply what they see and feel ; as people's beliefs change, truth for them also changes. For a long time the Copernican theory has been the prevailing doctrine for the civilized world, but some time hence something else will take its place. For many centuries the Bible contained laws by which men governed their action, because they believed that its pages contained the absolute truth. Now people look for truth in some other direction, usually in some popular work of fiction. We have no truth really, we have only views of what we call truth. Every man has his own views, and one dogma succeeds another dogma until finally we have nothing but dogmas remaining.

Our views of what is true and what is untrue are changing somewhat every day. The difference for a single day is not very perceptible, but the changes that occur in our views in twenty-five or fifty years are quite remarkable. Thus, our views on gravity or electricity are not to-day what they were a century or two centuries since. And so with beauty. What is beauty? Is it something that really exists outside of ourselves, or is it merely what it is for us, what we believe, what we feel? What is hot or cold for us? Simply what feels hot or cold to us. But water that feels warm to us does not necessarily feel warm to others. All these questions depend upon certain conditions, upon how we are and how we feel.



Our opinions and conceptions are only for ourselves. Our conceptions concern ourselves and really concern no one else.

People begin with a great misconception as to the nature of truth in the first place. They think it is everlasting and unchangeable; that it is something not only for all time but for all peoples at the same time. That is not its character at all. Nothing is more variable and evanescent than truth. It is here to-day and somewhere else to-morrow; it takes one form in one century and another in another century. It has as many hues as the chameleon. What is true in one country is false in all others; and in the same country, what is accepted as truth at one time is certain not to be so accepted at another time. Truth is merely what people believe, and as they themselves change with time, their beliefs change likewise. When beliefs change, truth assumes for them a new form. When people cease to believe in God, in divinities, in demons, their whole view of nature changes.

We also have the erroneous impression that truth rules the world, that truth is all-powerful. As a matter of fact, truth does not govern men either in public or private affairs. In the first place it must be borne in mind that what we consider truth is merely what we call truth. It may be truth in reality, and it may not. How shall the matter be determined? Only by the opinions of men—there is no other standard—and every man has his own opinion, which differs more or less from the opinions of other people. Truth with us depends first of all upon proof. What is proof? A most unreliable and unsubstantial matter. It is merely what we call proof, and what we call proof is never proof for others, at least not to the same extent.

So far from truth's ruling this world, falsehood and fiction are factors far more potent in the affairs of men than truth. Even falsehood is just as powerful as fact, so long as it is believed to be fact. Truth and lies are faced exactly alike, and that is the reason why it is so difficult to distinguish one from the other. A forged bill passes just as well as a genuine bill, so long as everybody believes it to be genuine. And really what is the difference between a forged and a genuine bill? None at all. They are both made of the same paper, and they have equally fine work. The forged bill has every requisite and characteristic that belongs to a genuine bill, or it would not prove to be a success. Why, so exactly are they alike that experts are often unable to say whether it is forged or not. What is a genuine bill? A finely engraved sheet with signatures, and a forged bill is nothing less.

How are people overcome, how are they convinced? By



lies—always by lies. It is so in business, it is so in politics, it is so in religion, it is so in government. Everybody lies! Lies! Lies! All lie! If people really understood and appreciated the truth, they would not tolerate their kings and masters even for a day. But they are ready to believe a lie, and that makes them submissive and tractable. That is the kind of people that ambitious and designing men prefer. They like a peaceful, easy-going people, those who never resist, never protest, no matter what happens.

Speaking about lies again, nobody is content to appear as he really is. Nothing could induce a man to come out in public in his pristine nakedness, and that is the reason why every man wears clothes. He exposes his hands and face, but that is a matter of necessity. Kings wear more clothes than people do ordinarily. Even savages paint and adorn themselves, in order to make themselves appear either more terrible or more beautiful than they really are. Bear in mind there is generally a lie, a deception, at the bottom of all that men do.

We really do not know where you would go to find what is unquestionably true. Is it in the verdict of a petit jury or in the opinion of a court? Their decisions are so often reversed that it cannot be that they are infallible. That a man is proved guilty in court, is absolutely no demonstration of his guilt. Is the Bible made up of truth exclusively? We know better than that. What is taught as true in one part of this book is condemned as falsehood in other parts. Besides, most of the volume is confessedly made up of allegory. And how much truth is there in allegory? As much as there is in the story of Sindbad the Sailor. Why, the very essence of allegory is that it should not be true. Is it in science that we shall find truth? No, that cannot be, for science itself changes more frequently than the moon. Nothing is more uncertain, more unreliable than what we call science. Science is merely what men believe for the time being. But men change their beliefs, and hence science must change.

How can there be any permanence in truth? It would seem that there could be no possibility of question about the soundness of this position: That ten thousand years hence, perhaps five thousand years hence, or possibly two thousand years hence, not one proposition that we now consider to be unquestionably true will be accepted as such by the people who live and think in those days. Truth decays and dies, as everything decays and dies. Everything is merely for a time, and a very short time at the farthest. In those future ages which we have been considering, the world will have new men, with new views, and they

will have necessarily new sciences, new arts, a new philosophy, a new religion, and new beliefs all around.

The question of what is truth is the question of what is anything or everything? Truth is merely true views of things. There is a true and a false view of everything. What, for example, is good? What is evil? They are as you look at the subject. Neither has any other character than what you give it. They change as you change and when you die they disappear and disturb you no more. Unquestionably, they exist nowhere except in the imagination of man. Bad things are merely those that we do not like. But there are and there must be things that people do not like, and hence there must be what we call evil. It is merely a matter of feeling, wishes, interests. Good and evil are merely the different ends of the same thing. Good is what we like, as bad is what we dislike. Righteous and moral are also conceptions of the same character. They are what please us and come up to our views of propriety. People change their views, and so their ideas of morality and righteousness change. What is moral in one place is not necessarily moral in another.

We are continually talking about things just and true. There are no such things in fact, or if they do exist, they are only the one-sided views of men. It is only a question of more or less, or what you compare with. What is true for one is false for another; what is just to one is unjust to another, what is good for one man is usually an injury to another.

We always start on a false basis, especially in considering new questions. We start with suppositions, with assumptions, hypotheses and theories—with things that are confessedly false to begin with. We grope around in the dark, and we always take the wrong track in order to find the right one. A man finds his turkey while he is looking for his cow. With us, in our inquiries, everything is experimentation. So, travelers in going to Europe, always have fixed ideas of the country before they start. After they arrive there and travel about, they gradually correct those ideas. But even when they return, their ideas are only partially correct. What writer who had been in Europe ever understood things as they are, or what two of them ever agreed on matters of detail? If they wrote up a bull fight their accounts differed greatly, because they saw differently.

The very nature of truth is that it cannot be eternal or universal. Truth is always more or less local, special, provincial. There is not, nor can there ever be, any such thing as universal truth. There never was a more beautiful or more interesting book, for its time, than our Bible—but that time was two, three

or four thousand years ago. Even truth has its day and it finally disappears. Our Bible must be classed among natural productions, and like all such productions, it must eventually pass away and give place to something more recent and more in accord with the times. Things that expire are not destroyed; nothing is destroyed. The Egyptian mummy is not a being destroyed, but it has become a back number. Men exist in the mummy form as they do in other forms.

That a truth is not a truth to-day is no proof that it never was a truth. Nothing has ever been that might not properly be called truth. Writings that we call classics to-day were current truth at one time. Sophocles, Homer, Euripides are back numbers now, but they were popular enough in their day. So it is with our Bible. The Bible was true—all bibles were true, but they do not remain so forever. They never were true for all peoples and all times. There never was such a truth or such a bible.

We are living at all times in a land of dreams; when we think we dream, and when we dream we think. We are constantly seeing things as we know they are not; we are always forming figures and making images with which to beguile or amuse ourselves. Our constant employment is to deceive ourselves, or to get all the diversion possible out of the deceptions practiced upon us daily by others. We love fiction above all other things, because fiction has always constituted an important portion of our daily pabulum. Least of all things are we concerned about truth. We began as children, and we never cease to be children—certainly we never put away childish things. We never take life seriously. Then how do we get along? Why, we simply drift!—and we land at last where fate happens to leave us.

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Thought is always discordant in its nature, always rebellious. Thoughts lead to change, and without thought there would be no change, no progress. Two people who think independently never think alike, because they themselves are not alike. Slaves and all people who do not think will submit cheerfully and conform to circumstances; there is never any trouble in their case. But thinking and inquiring men are always at variance with each other. Consider the quarrels among Socialists and Anarchists, and among new sects in every department of inquiry. Luther's Reformation led to no end of disputes and differences. There is no stopping point for philosophical inquiry. Those who

go a certain distance in their investigation are never satisfied until they go farther.

A man who thinks necessarily knows more than a man who does not think. A man who does not think cannot rise above the brute. If he possesses any talent it cannot be anything beyond that which is found among brutes. Men learn from study and contact with the world—they learn very little from teachers and books. It is this friction arising from contact that develops intellect and leads to knowledge.

All our knowledge is merely a development of what we think, and our whole intelligence is made up of our own thoughts and impressions. We cannot go beyond our thoughts; they are all that we know or ever can know. The most positive thing that we declare is simply what we think. We say this or that is so; we mean that we believe it is so. That is as far as we can go in any case. We are at all times, night and day, busy with our thoughts, with images and impressions that come up in our mind. Our dreams are our thoughts, precisely the same in character as our ordinary thoughts. We compare and combine our impressions, and that is the way we progress and gain knowledge. To know ourself is to know the world, and it will be found eventually, as we gain more light, that we are coextensive with the world. There is no line of demarkation that separates us from the world. The world is like the great ocean in which all individuality is lost. We behold the restless mass of waters, and nothing more.

It is very important that we should be continually impressed with the fact that we never get, under any conditions, anything but the thoughts of men. All laws, all creeds, all constitutions, are nothing but the thoughts and beliefs of certain men. When we move, it is because we think, and as the result of impressions. No beings move except as the result of thought and impression. Thoughts put the will in action. A log has no impressions, and hence it never moves except when it is moved. Men act wholly upon their impressions and opinions, and these are simply what they think. As intimated before, what we know or say is merely what we think.

It takes the most experienced thinkers years to comprehend, appreciate and assimilate a new truth, and this is done by an inward process that is peculiarly their own. New thoughts have to be digested, like food that is taken in the stomach, before they can form a part of our intellectual system. This takes time and how foolish it is to expect to enlighten and convert the common reader in the short space of fifteen minutes! It cannot be done, and it is ridiculous to make the attempt. It is only possible for



the teacher to exercise a sort of quickening power upon the learner's mind, and leave the seed that may be found there to germinate and grow as it may. There is only one way to make converts in a hurry, and that is with the sword, an instrument with which the author is not acquainted and which he declines to use.

As a rule, original thinkers speak to the people in an unknown tongue; they speak to those whose hearing is imperfect and whose understanding is not clear. What satisfactory results should be expected under such conditions as these? Men must have ears before they can hear, and they must have understanding before they can learn, even when the simplest truths are presented.

It is not the writings and speeches of men, of geniuses and thinkers, that move mankind. People must themselves feel, they must starve, they must suffer. they must have an experience of their own before they will rise in their might. This was certainly the case when the French Revolution began. Theories never give the masses much concern—certainly not those who do not and will not think. People must always feel before they can see. It is not the custom for masses to look ahead of them, and therefore they do not see what awaits them. It is impulse that moves bodies of men—reflection never. Individuals will sometimes reason, but bodies of men rarely.

You cannot know anything unless you think; you cannot do anything unless you think; you cannot be anybody unless you think. Or expressed in another form, the more you think, the more you will know, the more you will learn and the more you can accomplish, and therefore the greater will be your value to the world. For instance, think about war, its wicked character and its consequences. Think how brutal is the treatment of the men by their superiors, and of the natives of any country by the officers as well as the men of conquering armies. No wonder that men desert in war whenever they find an opportunity. No wonder they rebel on land and mutiny on shipboard. Is there no goodness or virtue except in force? Or rather, is there any virtue or goodness in force, when applied to men under any circumstances?

It is worth the effort of any man to become impressed with the fact that, so far as we ourselves are concerned, things are simply as we happen to think and as they appear to our vision. For instance, just now we look upon crime, as we call certain kinds of conduct, as *a horrible thing*, too dreadful even to think of! This explains the cruel, often shameful, treatment that men receive who happen to be detected in crime, or, as we call it,



who are "caught in the act." But some day later on, such conduct will assume a milder aspect, and it will be seen that criminals are not so wicked and so much worse than others as we have imagined them to be. The day is sure to come when we shall have no crimes—no conduct that we consider crime—and then of course we shall have no criminals. It all depends upon ourselves, and upon how we consider things, how we view them, how we look at them. A criminal, as we ought to see even now, is not an exceptional creature. He is one among a thousand, or among ten thousand. He is like the average. All men are criminals, all men do what they ought not to do. They do things against the law and against the wishes of the community, which are precisely the things that make men criminals in the estimation of their fellow men.

Opinions differ in different countries as faces differ, and for the same reason. Climate and conditions give shape and color to opinions, as they form and paint faces. See how the foreigner changes after he has lived in this country for a time. And notice how very much his children who are born here differ in appearance from those who are born abroad. It will also be found that they differ as much in their thoughts and ways of thinking as they do in their personal appearance and their way of acting. It is for this reason that men have one religion on the Ganges, another on the Nile, another on the Tiber, and another on the Thames, the sole reason for this difference lying in the difference of climate and conditions. What has a man himself to do with the shaping of his belief? As much as he has to do with the shape of his head or face, and no more.

## CHAPTER III.

### GOODNESS AND MORALITY.

The fact should never be overlooked for a moment that everything, and especially every quality, is wholly a relative matter. Nothing has any value or character except by comparison with the opposite. Positive and negative, like the qualities good and bad, go by couples. What is good for one person is bad for another person.

Things are good and beautiful only from our standpoint. Everything must be brought home to us. We judge not of things, but of ourselves, our feelings, our likes and dislikes. If a thing pleases us, it is beautiful or good. To use a maiden's expression, it is "lovely." But it is to be noticed that in all these and similar cases it is our feelings that are pleasant, not the things themselves. Things that do not please us are uniformly bad—everything depends upon how we think or feel. What we call ugliness savages call beauty. The ugliness in such cases is our own ugliness, and the beauty is their own beauty. There is no ugliness or beauty outside of ourselves.

There are no men that are either bad or good for everybody. There are men only that some people call bad, consider bad. Qualities of all kinds are only the results of opinion; they are mere reflections thrown off from the observer himself. There are no things that everybody regards as good. What one eats and relishes another rejects with disgust. We call things good merely because they please us. So a tree is tall or not tall according to the standard we take for comparison. It all depends upon how we think or feel, and upon the standard we use for measurement. But why condemn men for their opinions, which they can neither modify nor remove? Men are condemned solely for their opinions, and this is done by other men who have their opinions. A man is a heretic for some people, while he is a very rational and worthy being for other people.

Men have no character of their own, only as we assign them a character. Whether they are good or bad, depends upon how we feel, how we think. But what opinion shall a man have who has no feeling in the matter and who does not think? How shall a judge on the bench decide a case, being a man who is supposed to be without feeling or prejudice, a man who is not a man but a mere machine? As an impartial judge, what does he do? What does his decision accomplish, what light does it cast upon the case at last? He simply judges, decides, gives his opinion. How? Why, he takes one side or the other. He sides with one party and turns his back upon the other party; he favors one side and oppresses, wrongs the other side. That happens in every court decision. So far as right is concerned, one party is always as near right as the other. It is only in the standpoint men start from and the direction that they take, in their reasoning, that they actually differ. The judge in court does not solve the problem or change the matter at issue in any particular. He merely cuts the Gordian knot arbitrarily, as Alexander did. He does not attempt to solve the problem. The parties at the conclusion stand just where they stood before the trial. The party defeated submits because he is overpowered, but his opinion remains as it was before. The other party goes off triumphant with nothing more than he had at the outset, except the decision of the court in his favor. Where does justice come in under such circumstances? It is never fair for any man, judge or no judge as he may be, to presume to put his feelings and opinions in the place of another man's feelings or opinion. Any man is quite as capable of judging his own case as some stranger is for him, especially as the stranger usually has no other knowledge of the case than what he gets from hearsay. The stranger who does so must act upon the assumption that he is a wiser and holier man than the party interested. But unfortunately we have never yet met a man who answered to any such description as that.

God is the only just judge, but he never presides at trials. His presence in court is a self-evident fiction. All the judgments rendered are those of common men, and God's presence is only a matter of proxy. There are no other judgments. All trials are shams and mere pretence—simply hocus pocus to justify men's wickedness and protect them against the legitimate consequences of their iniquity. If a man wishes to wrong us, and has the will and the power to do it, let him go at it boldly, and make no excuse or apologies whatever. Wrong-doing admits of no excuse or justification. If it is justified, it is not wrong-doing!

How one-sided and inexact are all our ideas of things.

What we call good others call bad. A conflagration is a bad thing for one who suffers loss, but it is a good thing for those who derive profit therefrom. Doctors profit by the misfortunes of other people. Much sickness is not a bad thing for members of that profession, if they and their families escape. One man gains a lawsuit, but somebody else must lose it. If one general triumphs, another general must be defeated, and so it goes all through life. Nothing that we say is strictly true. We are never perfectly well nor perfectly ill—in no case are we so well that we might not be better, nor so ill that we might not be worse. Ill or well is simply a question of more or less. Less ill means better ; more ill means worse.

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People as a rule have an erroneous conception of the true nature of morality, and they are especially mistaken in regard to the source from which it is derived. It is the general belief that morality is intimately connected with religion, and that at all times one implies the existence of the other, that people who are pious are necessarily moral, and that those who are moral must also have deep religious convictions. But such a notion as this is clearly founded in error. Quite aside from any special inquiry into the case and without any appeal to logic, it may be stated as a well known fact that in all communities there are plenty of moral men who are neither professors of religion nor believers in Christian doctrines ; and so there are plenty of earnest and devoted Christian people who really believe in God and Christ, and yet they could not be called moral according to the standard that is usually recognized in civilized lands. Indeed, there is a radical difference in the nature of morals and religion. They are derived from entirely different sources. Morals are merely customs that prevail in certain communities. They are simply evidences of what is considered proper and what as improper by men.

People make the same mistake in regard to education that they make in regard to religion, namely, that it makes men better. It is well known that education does not make men better. Education is merely a certain amount of knowledge acquired, and perhaps a certain amount of discipline applied, but what effect this knowledge or discipline has upon the conduct of men depends upon the kind of knowledge and the character of the discipline. It might be added that very many believe not only that education and religion make men better and happier, but that our laws also have the same effect. Here

again we find that the prevailing impression of the unreflecting masses of mankind is based on error. There are bad laws as well as good laws, and their effect upon the destiny of men depends entirely upon what happens to be the direction that they take.

Again, it must be remembered that most Christians merely profess religion, and the world never knows, perhaps the Christians themselves never know, how much of their Christianity is genuine and how much is spurious. The fact that a man merely professes religion or is enrolled as a member of some Christian church can have but a slight effect upon his character and his career as a man. Society has long since learned that it is never safe to depend upon a man's mere professions either in matters of religion or in any other direction. Our experience teaches us that there are good men in the church as there are bad men in the church, just as we shall find to be the case if we go among those who make no professions and belong to no church.

Most certainly morality does not come from the Bible; it comes from the people. As a matter of fact morality has but little connection with religion in any case. There is plenty of religion without morality and plenty of morality without religion. In other words, a person may be at the same time very religious and very immoral. The Bible has not changed in two thousand, perhaps not in four thousand years, but the standards of morality are changing every day. Besides, it will be remembered, we have all sorts of morality and standards of morality, according to times and peoples. German morality is one thing, French morality is another, and English morality is different from either. Our own morality to-day is different from what it was a hundred years ago.

No, it cannot be borne in mind too well, that in religion, as well as in the case of education and laws, the chief object in view is not to improve the character of men nor to make them happier. In religion the object is simply to save people's souls, which is to be done solely by obeying God and observing certain prescribed ceremonies and sacrifices with strictness and regularity. The object in education is to enlighten people, to enable them to shine in society, and perhaps to acquire certain powers and capabilities that they could not secure in any other manner. Education is strictly a business matter, with business ends solely in view. The object of ordinary laws is to enable those who are on the inside, the favored few, to so discipline and direct those on the outside that they will obey their masters at all times and pay the tribute demanded with cheerfulness and despatch.



Morals are laws made by men for men. They are simply usages which have grown into law from the tacit consent of the community continued along for an indefinite time. Religious laws have a different origin and a different purpose. They are supposed to come from God, through inspiration and revelation. There is nothing in common between religious law and moral law, except that in some cases one may contain provisions that the other also contains. So statute law is different from either. It treats of man in his relations to the state. These laws also contain many provisions that are found in both moral and religious law, and yet it is known to be entirely independent of either. A man is a good citizen if he obeys the officers of the government and follows the laws of the state, while he himself may be neither pious nor moral. It is well known that there are plenty of men who are considered good citizens, and are even known as moral men, and yet they neither profess nor believe in religion. Even the clergy have members who occasionally fall from grace, the same as other professions. And during the Dark Ages when men were more intensely religious than they ever were before or ever have been since, many practices were common in the church which are considered criminal, or at least immoral in our day. The rule then was that any fraud or trick was excusable, if it only promoted the success of the church. Lies were common enough, and forgeries were by no means rare even among professedly pious people. This is simply history without any attempt at making comments. There are plenty of good commands in the Bible, as well as bad ones: but good commands or good precepts do not make men good any more than good laws makes a people good. David and Solomon, and even Joshua, were pious enough, but nobody at the present day considers them models of either goodness or morality.

Morality is a matter of practice, not theory. The question is not what the Bible teaches, but what do those do who profess to believe in the Bible? Christ's teachings in the main are excellent. But how many Christians follow them to-day? It is a well known fact that many confirmed criminals are sincere believers in redemption through the blood of Christ. Indeed, who need redemption more than criminals and wicked people generally? They are the lost sheep that Christ came to save.

Finally, it must be remembered that what is called good or bad, moral or immoral, is wholly a matter of opinion among men, which varies with different peoples under different circumstances and at different times. Clearly enough, as we have already intimated, morals are something that God or religion has nothing to do with. If God established morals, they would

have some fixed or determinate character. As it is, they vary with climates, localities and races. Vice and virtue at best are closely allied. To have less vice means that we are inclined to virtue ; and to have less virtue that we are inclined to vice. It is a matter of degree, and the two easily graduate into each other. There is no distinguishing line between them. A vice in one case becomes a virtue in another. In war killing is meritorious, and the more a man kills, the higher he usually ranks. In ordinary society killing people, defenceless or otherwise, is against the law, and it is declared to be a crime. Among peoples not far advanced in civilization, robbery is a popular pursuit—indeed, it is through robbery that primitive peoples live, as well as a great many people who are not primitive.

Good morals belong to no one people nor to any single age. They are entirely temporary, variable, and under all circumstances extremely uncertain. Morals are never meant for the whole people, a feature which is characteristic of all laws, whether human or divine. No law was ever enacted which it was expected all men should observe. There are exceptions to all rules, and there certainly are plenty of exceptions to all laws. A favored few always manage to escape the burdens of society ; and when it comes to a question of morals, they usually do as they please.

## CHAPTER IV.

### MODESTY AND REVERENCE.

Be modest, that is, be humble, be retiring, be unpretending. But why so? Why should any one be humble, or retiring or unpretending in the presence of other people, often of most ordinary people? Simply to be polite, to be in good form, to do as other nice and well bred people are supposed to do. But that is no reason at all, no rule by which any one must necessarily govern his action. People are as apt to do wrong as right; or at least their ideas of right may not accord with our ideas of right, and there is absolutely no necessity that we should pursue their line of conduct or endorse all that they decide to have done. We are supposed to be free men, and being such, we have nothing to consult but our own opinion and our own tastes, when we wish to determine what we had better do. To be polite, to be in good form in all you do, to consult the wishes of other people and disregard your own, is to be a slave, or at least to take the position of a slave and conduct yourself as a slave ordinarily conducts himself. A slave always humbles himself before his superiors; he takes off his hat at all times, and on rare occasions he prostrates himself in the dust. The slave is the politest of persons. He never goes before others, he goes behind others; he speaks in subdued tones, and never says a word of his own merits. Indeed, being a slave, he has no merits. He never eats till others are filled, and then he is satisfied with the leavings. He stands up while others sit down. He does everything for other people, and never does anything for himself. Poor creature! Who shall take care of him and provide for him finally? The Lord—the Lord attends to that business. Sometimes he does, but often these children die of hunger and neglect.

But why should a man be eternally modest? Why should

he be perpetually praising other people, and never saying a word of his own claims? There is no reason—certainly no good reason can be given. If a man humbles himself, everybody will tread upon him or step over him. He accepts a low rank for himself, and naturally enough everybody is willing to take him at his own rating, especially since it makes more room for his competitors in the upper departments of life. Every man is taken largely at his own estimate, at least in the first instance. People have not the time to investigate the claims of every stranger that comes before them for recognition.

No, there is not the slightest excuse for a man to belittle and disparage himself. Modesty is not a virtue, it is only a custom, a practice. It is a weakness. It is often a folly, and it is always an injustice to one's self. If a man has done a good thing and he knows it is a good thing, why should he say it is not good, or even treat the matter with indifference? There is no reason, except that custom requires it. A wise man makes his own customs as he goes along. If a custom is wrong, let him set about changing it. If other people presume to make laws for us, may we not also make laws for them in return? Modesty means deference, homage, servility—practices that are deprecated and disused by every sensible man. Modesty is born from fear, or at least from timidity. All its characteristics are slavish. A self-reliant man is never modest in the ordinary acceptation of the term. There was no modesty about Napoleon, or Cæsar, or Cromwell. A man who is content to be in the rear rank will always be allowed to remain there.

Why should a man never speak of himself? Whom does he know better than himself? In whom does he take a greater interest than in himself? Why may not a man, at proper times, in proper places, and in a proper manner, speak of himself—his doubts, his difficulties, his dangers, his defeats, his victories, or even his achievements? We see absolutely no reason why a sensible man may not. When one tells of himself, he tells what he knows; when he speaks of others, he tells only what he imagines or believes that he knows. How shall we ever get any real knowledge of others and their experience, if they are not allowed to speak of themselves? No, it is not necessarily a weakness, nor even an impertinence, for a man to speak of himself. There is neither merit about it nor demerit. We allow a man to put his own price upon his own property. Why should he not also be permitted to place his own estimate on his achievements, without being exposed to the charge of vanity or pre-presumption?

But why should a man play the part of a stupid ox, especially

if he knows he is capable of playing a part much higher up on the programme? We never could see why a sensible man should do anything of that kind, unless he is content to take the position of a slave or a sycophant. The theory is that a man must humble and disparage himself in order to elevate his master. This idea of servility, like all our ideas of politeness, originates in palaces and courts. Precedence in all things must be given to the master, simply because he happens to be the master. This is how it comes that all gentle-folk, so called, are flunkeys, in spirit and manner, if not in form and in fact.

If you are expected to be honest with other people, why should you not be honest with yourself? If you make a blunder, or do what is wrong, why not say so? And if you have done a wise or worthy action, and you know it, as most people do in such cases, why should you endeavor to conceal it and act as if you were ashamed of what you had done? Civility is akin to servility. You must never speak of yourself first! Why not? Are you not as good as any one else? You certainly ought to be at least. If everybody made a fool of himself in this way, we should have none but fools. Finally, did you ever stop to think that, to be real polite and in "good form," you must play that you are the slave and all the other fellows are masters? They do so in China, and all over the world.

This tabooing of one's self and never mentioning one's own name, which is so prevalent all over the civilized world, is a mere conventionalism which was never founded on sound sense. The Germans carry the idea still farther. Among them, to be proper, you must not say "thou" but "they," when you address a person. It was on the same principle of reverence that the Jews never pronounced the word "Jehovah." They called the Deity by another name. Among the natives of Australia a man is not permitted to mention the name of his mother-in-law or father-in-law. In Sumatra, the native abstains from pronouncing his own name, for precisely the same reason that we do, because he wants to appear polite. Indeed, savages have plenty of politeness. If we were not all born in a state of slavery, and we had not remained in that state up to the present time, things would not appear to us as they do. Our habits and education have everything to do with our impressions.

Modesty easily gradates into bashfulness and shame. But what should a man be ashamed of? Of his form and personal appearance as nature made it? Why should a man be ashamed of his person, unless he is deformed? And even then he might feel pained, but not actually ashamed. Should a man be ashamed of his conduct? Not if he is rational. No man should



be ashamed of what he does, even though some people may call it wrong. A man should not only have the courage of his convictions but also of his action. A brave man is never either afraid or ashamed. He always does what he feels like doing and what he believes he ought to do. The real hero in this world is the man who always does what he feels to be right; with the people generally, the verdict, we know, is different. They vote a man a hero who does uniformly what he knows to be wrong, such as killing people in war or acquiring a vast amount of property through the labors of other people.

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We sometimes think people would get along better in this world if they should dispense with reverence entirely. Why should we reverence any man living or dead? A slave might do so, but a free man never. We are accustomed to revere men because we believe them holy and we imagine that they have natures that are different from ours. But no such men are in existence—there can be none. All men are alike in material and make-up, and though individuals may differ in minor respects, the difference is in no case radical. There are no truly sacred or divine beings in all this world—certainly there are no men who are better than other men in any essential respect. It is the clothes, the tinsel, the gems in the diadem—these are the things with which we are really impressed. But why should we be deluded for a moment by such tawdry articles as these? No man living is entitled to our reverence or submission, because no man is better than ourselves.

Why should we dread people? Why should we honor them or bow down to them? Why should we go a step out of our way to see Napoleon Bonaparte, if he were living, or Capt. Kidd, or Louis XIV., or Oliver Cromwell, or even Grover Cleveland if he happened to pass through our town? What folly, what idiocy, what toadyism! Would these men come a step out of their way to see us? Would they even bow if they passed us in the street? Certainly not. And yet we would run after them like children, because we have such an infatuation for kings and conquerors, and for noted men generally!

The two main sources of misery among mankind will be found to lie in these two weaknesses: Ignorance and cowardice. And we may add that these are things of which men should be most ashamed, rather than of what is called their crimes and misdoings.

## CHAPTER V.

### GIFTS AND GRATITUDE.

Giving is akin, in its character and effects, to loving, favoring, and protecting. Giving is always partial, always exclusive. If we wish to be fair and just, we should not select our favorites and give to them only. We should give to all and in equal proportions. But giving, like protecting, and like benevolent work of all kinds, never takes any such direction.

Giving implies two classes of people—those who give and those who receive. But where shall we draw the line between those who should be the givers and those who should be the receivers? Why should not the givers be the receivers and *vice versa*? If giving is not the dictate merely of a whim, it should be based upon the merits of the recipient—but it rarely is so. Certainly in most cases those who give have more merit than those who receive.

Again, giving should be condemned as an unprofitable, if not an improper practice. If the giving is merely a scheme by which to bribe the recipient and influence him in some way, of course it should be condemned as an unworthy action. If the gift is made without any motive, and without expecting to derive some benefit therefrom either direct or remote, then it is simply aimless and foolish. It is a mere waste of property. Besides, giving seldom works well in practice. It tends to give the recipient a higher opinion of himself. If the amount given is large, it leads to indolence, since if people find that there are those who are willing to provide for them, they will see no necessity of providing for themselves. Charity usually works in precisely that way. Where it is possible, people should be educated to take care of themselves and they should have no other dependence than upon their own exertions. The only way people can ever be independent is by their ceasing to be dependent.

Giving is rarely a work of good policy. Those who receive

come to depend upon the giver ; and if they receive a little to-day, they expect more to-morrow. That is the tendency in all cases, so that generally the disappointment in not receiving must nearly counterbalance the gratification for what has been received.

No, giving is to be condemned as a practice for a hundred reasons, but for none more than because of its manifest injustice. When we do give to this or that man, why not give to a thousand or ten thousand others just as deserving? We give because of our abundance. Why should not everybody give to us who has been more fortunate in accumulating property than we have? Giving will not stand the test of reason, view it from any standpoint that we like. If the giving is a question of merit, give to all who have merit, and let everybody give. Also, let everybody receive. If it is because people have abundance, let everybody give who has abundance, and to everybody who has not an abundance. This just rule would keep people busy exchanging gifts all the time. Really, giving is not a reasonable act but merely the result of custom and of some strange impulse. People want to appear good : at least they want to be called good. They want to do their duty.

The humblest recipient can easily be spoiled by regular or even by irregular giving. He soon comes to demand it as his right, and he can easily conjure up some sufficient reason in his mind why he is *entitled* to all he receives—and more. Try the practice of giving, and see if that is not the uniform result. The tendency is, as we have already intimated, to spoil people in a dozen different directions. The best kind of help all around, is *self-help*, or that kind of assistance that enables or induces people to help themselves.

Then there is another striking feature which deserves to be noticed in connection with this topic. It is the fact, which every one must have discovered, that people are amazingly anxious to get something for nothing and to have something given to them. In other words, in order to have fifty cents given to them out and out for something that they have no use for, many people would be willing to invest even ten dollars of their own hard-earned funds. That is simply human nature—a thirst that cannot be allayed to get something for nothing, *no matter what it costs*.

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People who do favors for others, and especially for bodies of men, hoping to enjoy gratitude as their compensation, or to re-

ceive some more substantial remuneration, will often find themselves most grievously disappointed. Gratitude, in this self-seeking world of ours, is a most unsubstantial return for services rendered. The best way for every man is to do what he wishes, or what he feels that he ought to do, without any thought of gratitude or any expectation of remuneration. It is poor policy to make a practice of receiving favors, and it is never a profitable business to grant favors.

It is about time that we gave up talking about gratitude. Gratitude is only a form of compensation which we exact from others, an obligation which we seek to impose upon them, often without their consent, and even against their wishes. If people insist upon compensation, or returns in some way, for what they do for others, they might better leave such work unperformed. Shall we do no kindness, shall we render no favors to any one, without obligating him and expecting something in return? As we have before intimated, there is no merit in doing anything that is done for a price, or for returns of any kind. As a matter of fact a true kindness is something that cannot and should not be requited. Compensation should never be mentioned in that connection. The moment a kindness is paid for the transaction is closed and the kindness disappears. There is no kindness in hired service of any kind—it is purely a business transaction, and when the wages are paid the debt is canceled. If we do things gratuitously, as we claim, how shall we demand even gratitude or any sense of obligation in return? The doctrine of reciprocity is a poor basis to act upon in the affairs of this world. One side or the other is sure to get the worst of the bargain.

No action is, properly considered, meritorious, and no man is entitled to praise above his fellow men. Neither does any man deserve censure. Censure lies wholly in our opinion, which may be right and may be wrong. No man has any right to set himself up as the judge of other men's action, either to praise or condemn them. No man is properly the cause of any result, nor can he be the true hero of any achievement. No man accomplishes anything of moment alone. All our statesmen and military and naval heroes are rendered renowned and are accorded praise that properly belongs, if to any one, to the subordinates who are in the service of these men. No matter how great any man may be, he can do at best only about as much as other men could do under the same circumstances, and not any more.

The surest way, and in fact the only way, to avoid disappointment is to expect nothing. People who do favors for others, and especially those who tax their energies for the sole benefit of the public, ask and expect too much in return. If



they did what they ought to do and desired to do, where does the obligation come in? They have no right to demand honors and applause in return for what they have done of their own volition. It is a great weakness in any man to ask or demand such things as compensation for what he assumes that he did. This was the failing of Horace Greeley, a most excellent, able and worthy man. He thought the people of the United States ought to elect him president, because he had edited a good newspaper, opposed slavery all his life and favored temperance. But the people decided, as they had a perfect right to do, that they wanted a different man for that place, and the result was that Horace Greeley absolutely died of a broken heart, from the effects of disappointment and despair arising from his defeat. A really strong man will rise above the taunts and slights, and even the unfairness, of the public. As we have intimated before, he will expect nothing better, and hence he will not be disappointed.

Gratitude is something that is supposed to come from a being that is lower and it is considered an offering that is due to some one who is superior. Kings and masters never feel grateful to their subjects for services rendered, for the very best that the slave can do is what he ought to do. Men get no thanks for what they ought or are obliged to do. A man pays his debts—he cancels his obligations—and he expects no thanks for that.

Aboriginal people know little or nothing of gratitude, nor of many other things that we consider virtues. Even the enlightened Greeks had a similar failing. Our laws, our codes, our morals, our virtues even, are peculiar to ourselves. We should not think for a moment that everybody has the same notions as we have on these subjects. Many people do not bother with either vices or virtues. They know nothing about them, and they do not care.

As we are not supposed to be slaves or subjects, there is nothing really that we ought to feel grateful for—we have no obligations. All business ought to be done on a cash basis—no debts, no standing obligations, no duty, no gratitude, no homage. Owe no man anything—not even thanks or favors, certainly not obligations. Some people think they must be loyal to the king, to their friends, to everybody. Why should not the king also be loyal to his subjects? No, we, the subjects, must yield to the king, must sacrifice, must do as we are ordered to do, never murmuring and never expecting any return or compensation.

If the principle of gratitude is to hold good, where would the obligation end? When a man returns a favor, he simply does a new favor, and the original party ought himself to feel



obligated ; and thus new favors and new obligations would arise indefinitely. This often happens in the case of Christmas gifts, and there is really no end to them until some one fails to do his or her duty in giving. In the same way revenge acts. Where could it be expected to end, if it is a good and proper thing?

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## CHAPTER VI.

### DEBTS AND OBLIGATIONS.

Anybody who urges people to run into debt and cover their property with mortgages gives them very bad advice, even in this age when credits are the rule and cash payments are the exception. People do not need to be urged and encouraged to run into debt by those who recommend it as highly desirable. It comes easy enough to run into debt without urging. It is precisely like falling off a log. The times favor it, the money-lenders favor it, the merchants favor it. Money is made by running into debt, but only by an exceptional few—to the multitude, running into debt is a losing game, figure it as you will. A little of running into debt by young people in good health who have something substantial to show for their investment in the end may be a good thing. It incites to labor and saving, in the case of careful and judicious people. But after all, running into debt is something never to be recommended by any one for any one. There are too many chances, too many circumstances beyond the control of the borrower. He is entirely at the mercy of the money-lender—the latter owns the debtor body and soul. There are many good men who lend money—indeed, money-lending is very common—but a majority of such lenders resemble Shylock in many particulars.

Borrowing, we know, is one way to get rich, but it is always a risky process. *It often fails.* Besides, we would not recommend striving to get rich to any one. *It is not worth any man's while.* To be independent is another matter. That is a worthy ambition for any person.

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Why will people persist in burdening themselves with debts, contracts and obligations of any kind? Every contract, every

obligation, is a mortgage upon the person—especially if the party be a man of honor—and such encumbrances are seldom removed with ease. What makes the proceeding all the more senseless, is that in nine cases out of ten the obligation assumed is entirely unnecessary.

If you propose to do anything, why not wait till you get ready? Perhaps you may die, or possibly you may change your mind before the appointed day arrives. The best rule of life that any man can make and follow is this: Never make promises—certainly never make them if it is possible to avoid doing so. No man can call himself a free man if he is burdened with obligations of any character. It is far more manly not to make promises than it is to break them after they are made. If you make no promises, you can do as you please; if you make promises, then some one else is your master and you must do as he pleases. Viewed in any light, to make promises is a foolish venture which sometimes turns out well, but often does not. In most cases, we make promises or engagements because some one asks us or importunes us to do so. But a man will be sure to meet with a very unhappy fate in the end if he makes a practice of doing everything and anything that everybody asks him to do.

It should be remembered that no man has the power to place us under obligations. That is a personal matter and it requires a personal effort. No man can be obligated in any manner unless he obligates himself, and every man who at any time takes such a risk does himself a great injustice.

People love to talk about obligations—our obligations—obligations that we are under to do this or that, or ten thousand other things! But really we are under obligations to no man at any time. We do as we please, and you may do as you please, or as you consider it best to do. You can be the judge of what you do, and we will also be the judges of what we do. We are under no obligation to make this world good and happy—we could not if we tried. Still people will insist that we must meddle with the world, correct its faults and save it from its sins. We deny that we are under any such obligations. It requires all the time of an ordinary man to take care of himself.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CHARACTER AND QUALITIES.

Character is that something which makes people and things what they are. And what makes character? Simply the material of which individuals are composed and the external influences by which they are affected. But as the material of which bodies are composed continually changes, and as the external influences by which they are affected also change, it follows as a natural consequence that no body, no creature, nothing, can have what might be called a permanent or established character. Character and qualities are not possessions that belong to bodies, and they do not constitute something that is inseparable from them. As we have already intimated, the characteristics and qualities of things are given to them by the influences which develop them and which make them what they are, and since these influences and conditions change, the bodies or objects must themselves change.

If we bear these facts or conclusions well in mind, we must be able to perceive that nothing continues to exist for any appreciable length of time. To exist, a creature or a thing must have a character of its own, and that character must be unchangeable. The moment an object changes its character in the slightest respect, it must cease to exist, since the existence of an object depends entirely upon its maintaining its character unchanged, and likewise retaining all the qualities and attributes that have been peculiar to it from the beginning. To add to an object, to take from it, or to modify it in any manner, is to destroy it, since it has ceased to be what it was before and has become something entirely different. The reason why we do not notice or appreciate this well established fact, is that the changes are so gradual, they are so quietly made, so imperceptible and so constant, that they do not attract our attention.

It is only when we compare the beginning and the end of a long series of steps or changes, as youth and old age, or the hamlet with the full grown city into which it has finally expanded, that we perceive that the identity has been destroyed and one thing has come forward to replace another thing which has departed.

We are in the habit of speaking of things and calling them identical, when we know they are not so. The river, we know, is simply the water by which it is constituted; but the water that flows by us to-day cannot be the same water that we saw yesterday, and hence it cannot really be the same river. Its identity is being changed every moment; and so it is with every object in nature. It appears and disappears and it is replaced constantly; it is born and expires every instant. Such is the unalterable law of nature. How can we say that a man, any man, lives ninety or one hundred years? The man that dies is not the child that was born—there is nothing in common between the two. When we come to obtain a closer insight into the nature of death than we have at present, we shall have a different conception of its character from what we have had all along. Death is constant; it is ever present with us. And still we are afraid to die! As if we had not been dying and been replaced by a different being every day and every moment of our lives! We are a mere drop in the ocean. We bubble up, appear on the surface for an instant, and then we sink and are lost in the ocean again, being at all times nothing more nor less than what we were in the beginning. At best, we were never more than a mere form, a shadow, a phenomenon, at any period of our existence.

Everything external and internal has an effect on character—the climate, the country, the scenery, the people. Everything that a man eats and drinks, especially the latter, leaves its impression. We all know how a single dose of whiskey of suitable size will change the disposition of men, making one morose and another hilarious. We know that the food which we feed a tree or an animal, and its quantity, affect the size and character very materially. The animal that lives is not changed, it is true; that simply disappears and is replaced daily by another and entirely different animal.

Remember that all the qualities that objects are supposed to have are assigned to them by men. They appear green to some and blue to others, violet in one case and lilac in another, handsome to one and ugly to others, tall to one party and short to another party. All is relative, and everything depends upon the one who makes the comparison and how he does it. All color

comes from reflection, and so does character. Water under one temperature is a liquid, under another it is a solid, and under another it is a vapor. So the metals may have the solid or the liquid form; and some gases under pressure may assume the solid form. External conditions may change the nature entirely. Many gases may be transformed into liquids. Which is the natural state of these bodies? Doubtless one is as much so as another. Steam and ice are as much forms of water as the liquid is itself. They are all forms of some imaginary thing which is neither ice, water nor vapor.

A man never changes his opinion; but new men follow old men, and the new men may have new opinions. Outside influences determine a man's character, and character determines conduct. But reason, which is the result of outside influences, also affects conduct.

No man completes his career till he dies. He changes little by little every day. He acts somewhat upon the world, and the world reacting exerts some influence upon him. Napoleon at twenty-one was not, practically, the same man as Napoleon at fifty. He was an entirely different person at each of these periods, though of course there were many points of resemblance between the two. Suppose we saw the pictures of the two Napoleons, would we recognize them as being one and the same person? They are not the same person, or we would not speak of them as two separate individuals. There can be no two samenesses; if there were two samenesses, they would be identical, and hence only one. Resemblance is quite different from sameness or identity. There may be a resemblance between two individuals, but there cannot be a sameness in any case. The moment there is a change, then identity ceases. The slightest change in ten makes it something different from ten; add to or take from an ounce, and it ceases to be an ounce. The moment a man changes in the slightest, he becomes a new individual.

Does the number or quantity make any difference in character or quality? If a community is made up of fools, are they not all equally fools, and does the number elevate the group to any appreciable extent? Or in other words, do ten fools know any more than one fool does? If anything they really know less, for men in bodies paralyze each other and they know less than the men do as individuals. This is a well attested fact in all legislative, judicial and deliberative bodies. What makes a nation eminent is *not its numbers*, but a few talented and remarkable individuals. *Numbers never help in such matters.* If a man has a million pennies fresh from the mint, what has he more than if he had only one penny? They are all duplicates and



after a man has seen one, he has seen all. After the first specimen, the rest are mere counters. And yet, to speak accurately, they are not duplicates. Each must have some little point or characteristic of its own. They certainly were not made at the same moment, and the space occupied by any one is different from that of all the rest. Nature, we know, has no duplicates. It affords resemblances, but no case where two things are identical. What man does in all cases is machine work ; but nature makes nothing, not even a hair, without being original. It has no type, or at least it follows none. Out of ten million faces, no two are alike, and no two could replace each other. Man is fond of order, of repetition, of geometrical figures oft reproduced. That is because he is only a copyist. He never gets an idea that does not come from nature. Indeed, he himself came from nature.

Nature could not produce two things exactly alike, because they are always differently located and they are each affected by conditions and influences which are peculiar to their case.

Again, we say, numbers do not count. They may be serviceable in calculations, as letters are in algebra and figures are in geometry, but they amount to nothing beyond that. There is nothing in nature to correspond to numbers, or to operations in numbers. There is no adding, subtracting, dividing, multiplying in nature. There are no fractions in nature—all are wholes. There is no such thing as two apples, two cows, two horses—that is, no repetition, no case of the same thing twice. We have one apple and one apple, but that does not make two of any one thing, of either one apple. Things cannot properly be counted, because they cannot be classified. To classify things and bring them into the same category, they must be exactly alike. Where are the two things that are exactly alike? Is it our two eyes, or two feet, or two fingers?

The opinion of one wise man is worth more than that of a million of idiots, because a million of idiots know no more than one idiot knows. So sixteen ounces weigh no more than one ounce ; but a pound weighs more, because it is sixteen times as heavy. You cannot weigh one ounce against two ounces, or against sixteen ounces. An ounce will balance an ounce, and there it stops. If you add other ounces to the scale on the other side, it will not act upon them, because its weight was neutralized by the first opposing or counteracting ounce. Action must equal the reaction in all cases. It is no more trouble to take a hundred steps than one step, since you take one at a time always. Everything is only one, and it cannot be changed into something more than one.

If it is the quality that does the business, what good will numbers do? If quinine cures people, a speck will answer; if more is required, it is the quantity and not the quinine that cures. Two heads are never better than one, if they are both sheep-heads. How could they be? If an acre of a certain piece of land is poor, how could ten acres of the same kind of land be any better? When land is worthless, the more a man has the poorer he is. One hundred men cannot do more than one man, provided they are all of the same strength or calibre. What one man does, another man of course cannot do.

Take the case of reputation or fame. What does that amount to? If ten men say that we are wise, does that prove that we are wise? That is merely their opinion. If ten thousand men said so, would that make the case any stronger? Such is fame, such is character. It is only what men say, a good many men say—as if that made any difference. Fame is generally based upon falsehood, upon a misapprehension, or a misconception and misinformation as to facts. Every man knows what he himself is, what he knows and what he can do—or he ought to know—but nobody else can have that knowledge. The opinion that people form of us is always gratuitous, always fictitious. It is not founded upon knowledge, upon truth, upon fact. It is pure guesswork. This is evident enough from the mere fact that no two people have the same idea of any other man's character. One man thinks this and another thinks that; and sometimes they do not think or consider at all, they merely assume. That is just what character amounts to in this world. And such is fame!

Still farther. We are constantly getting credit for what other people have done, just as men get rich from what other people have earned. It is hard drawing a strict and correct line between what a man has done and what he has not done. In fact it is very little that a man does alone, that is, without assistance and co-operation from some source. We do not see how a man can claim any credit for anything that he has accomplished. Even the power that enables us to do in the first place comes from nature, and the opportunity to do is usually a matter over which no man has any control. Men are constantly parading in livery that does not belong to them, and they boast of deeds for which they deserve no credit whatever. The general gets credit for what his subordinates have accomplished, and captains get credit for what was really achieved by the men. In the departments of government, the heads go away with all the honor, while the clerks do the work and are the ones to whom the credit properly belongs.

The fact cannot be fixed in the mind too firmly, that no man passes for what he really is. He is always rated a little higher or a little lower than he should be ; or at least, for some reason, the measure applied in his case is not a just one. Moreover, it is a mistake to suppose that men possess but one character. Every man has really as many characters as he is days old, for no man is precisely the same in character one day as another. He has at best as many characters as there are people around him who form their opinions of him and serve as mirrors in which he is reflected. In this case, it will be observed, that much depends upon the nature of the mirror, a concave mirror presenting a very different image from that of a convex mirror. Yet one is as much a mirror as the other, since both are reflectors. If a man appears distorted in these reflections, what can he do about it? Just so, if his character appears distorted in a newspaper, how will he help himself?

We often ask, how does anything look? How does a person look? That depends upon conditions and circumstances. It depends upon the point of view, out of ten thousand possible points of view. Is it a front view, a back view, a side view, a view from this direction or a view from that direction? It is well known that the point of view makes a vast difference in the appearance of an object as seen by an observer. It depends upon the light or shade thrown upon the object. It depends upon the feelings and condition of the observer.

Does a man at all times look alike? No, he never looks alike for two consecutive moments—nothing does. A piece of court plaster on the face, spectacles on the nose, or a night-cap on the head alters a man's appearance surprisingly. Why talk about a man's looks, as if there were some standard or stable view of him which he always preserves? This is a very serious delusion that prevails. No two likenesses of a man ever look alike, because they are taken under different conditions, and there are always striking points of difference in the case.

What we have said of a man's pictures is true also of his character. No man has a stable or standard character. A man has a thousand or a million of characters, as there may be a thousand or a million points of view from which his picture may be taken. When we ask how a man's picture looks or how he looks, that is a very indefinite question. When, how taken, by whom, from what point of view, and who is the observer? Circumstances alter cases as to how a man looks or how he is at any moment. How foolish to assume that a man is always the same man ! The fact is he is never the same man for any two succes-

sive moments. Man is merely a phenomenon, and phenomena always change. There is no such thing as rest.

Every man appears somewhat different to every person with whom he is acquainted; and to himself he appears different from what he does to his acquaintances. How then shall we assert that a man has only one character? Napoleon has been dead for many years, but people are still drawing sketches of both his person and his life. Are there any two of them that agree? So it is with the character of Christ, of God, of the Devil. Ideas change with the times, and so do sketches and representations.

Most of the characters of prominent men as the world understands them come from history. And what is history? Mostly fable. What the historian states is what he believes, what he has read, what he has heard. He presents merely the view of one man, taken from a single point, and usually with some purpose in mind, some prejudice either one way or the other. History is being continually revised and rewritten. This is an evidence that history is not reliable; if it were right in the first place, it would need no revision, no rewriting. The history of Washington in 1783 is not the history of Washington as it is written in 1903. These histories are different not only in unimportant particulars, but in every essential respect—just as the history of a child three years old differs from that of the man of forty or seventy years. General Washington died many years ago, but from the day of his death, down to the present moment, his history has never ceased to change and develop.

History at best is only a rude picture, a very imperfect sketch drawn by a man who has never perhaps seen his subject and who draws chiefly from hearsay. Such is history, and on such an infirm foundation as this must the biographies of great men rest! How shall we ever know what great men really were? As a matter of fact, *we never can know*. It is like a case in court which has finally come to an end. We have the decision, but we are not any wiser than before. Decisions prove nothing; history proves nothing. What do we know that is reliable of David, Solomon, Alexander, Rameses, or even Julius Cæsar? Precious little, and even that we are uncertain about.

Again, what is truth! It is never what we thought it was. We thought it was something tangible, something substantial, but how sadly were we mistaken! Much is said about it, and but little is known. For what has history been written thus far? Chiefly to glorify kings and conquerors. By whom? By favorites who got their pay for their services.

What character or quality does a thing possess which is



made up of parts or individuals, as all things are found to be? A book, a town, or a battle, for instance? What may safely be predicated of one part cannot be truly predicated of another part. One part of the Bible is good, and in another part sections may be found that to people of refined taste are highly objectionable; so of a town, which has good buildings in one part and dilapidated structures in another part. How can we predicate anything of a whole town? How can we say it is white or yellow or red, when the fact is that only some parts of it are yellow or red or white?

As a matter of fact, bodies which are groups have no qualities. They exist only as the individuals of which they are constituted exist, and these always differ in character. We cannot comprehend or conceive of a group as one uniform whole, as we know it is not such. What character has a dozen men or a half dozen horses, all differing from each other as men and horses always do? None whatever. What character have Christians or Mahometans, taken as a group or body? No character. There are all sorts of Christians and all sorts of Mahometans. No two of them are alike, and when we describe or characterize one we never describe or characterize another. So there are all sorts of Americans, Irish, Turks and Italians. We cannot speak truthfully of any one of these groups and say they are this or that, or something else. We cannot speak of ministers or editors as classes with any sort of justice. They have no character independent of the individuals of whom they are composed, and these always differ. They have no existence outside of the individuals. No two ministers or lawyers or doctors are alike in any one particular. Then how shall we describe the group which they constitute, and which is nothing but these individuals taken together? They have not the same form and they never occupy the same place. They are as distinct and different as two beings possibly can be. When we speak of the English, we mean at most only a few English. We say that they are tall, brave, noble, handsome. But we know very well that all Englishmen are not tall, or brave, or noble or handsome. *No two are alike in any respect.*

It should not be forgotten that the form in which we now appear is only one of our forms, and this form is no more our proper form than is any one of the others. However, it may be more easily perceived and perhaps better understood than other forms. We shall exist forever, but not in the present form. Take the case of water again. It may be a rock and take the form of ice; it may be a liquid and take that form; or it may be a vapor and take the form of steam—either one as true a form of



water as the other. All solids are composed largely of water, and water contains gases. It must be remembered that the solid is just as much a natural form of water as the liquid or vapor forms. Metals may assume, at different times and under different circumstances, the whole three forms of solid, liquid and vapor.

Does the metal cease to exist when it changes from a permanent solid (permanent only under certain conditions of temperature, etc.) to a liquid or gas? Things exist long after we fail to see them—as in the gaseous form for example. Is form essential to individuality? As we have already intimated, the solid is no more a form than the liquid or gas is. Even rocks are a form of a liquid. They can be melted, and they always contain large quantities of water. The earth itself is largely solid, but also largely liquid and gaseous. The air is as much a part of the earth as the water is, and the water as much as the rocks are.

Finally, most of the objects in this world of which we talk and think do not have any forms and they do not affect our senses in any way. They do not exist, except in our imagination, and there they have a most precarious and ill-defined existence. Things that can with any propriety be said to exist must affect our senses in some way. But spiritual things, qualities and various other things do not affect our senses, and so they cannot be said to exist. We know indeed that there are no spirits, no qualities outside of the things to which these qualities belong. So it is with groups. They have no actual existence so long as their members exist, and when their members cease to exist, the groups disappear. This remark applies to all cases where the idea of classes enters. There are individual trees, but there is no such thing as a tree or any tree. The painter paints a tree; even when he paints some particular tree, it is always something quite different from the real tree. At best, it only shows one side of a tree, and a view of the tree from a single point among ten thousand other points of view. Suppose we speak of a bird or of birds. We talk about something that we could not find. There is not "a bird," nor "birds" as a class. There is only this or that or ten thousand other individual birds. All our class names apply to things that do not exist outside of the imagination. So we speak of love generally. That is very indefinite. It is not something that floats in the air. It is only found in the breasts of living creatures. So of words. What is the Latin word for "love"? The pupil responds that it is "*amo*." But it is not *amo* any more than *amat*, *ama*, *amans*, *amandum*, which are all equally forms of the word. So all

matter in general, all substance, as air, water, rock, land, sea, light, heat, has no form, no separate, individualized existence, and so it cannot affect our senses, nor can it come within the sphere of our comprehension. It is individuals alone that we can know; generalities are not intelligible or comprehensible. We can think about them and talk about them, but we cannot describe or define them, for they are destitute of either limits or dimension.

Our ideas of the character and value of the objects around us with which we are supposed to be acquainted vary continually, and they never appear to us twice in the same way. The sun and moon, for instance, appear small and circular because they are distant. If they were twice as near, they would appear much larger. The medium also through which we look, as air, glass, water, must make a difference in our impressions. The same man at ten feet, one hundred feet, a mile, would appear to us entirely different.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### LOVE UNMASKED.

Love may answer very well as a certain spice or balm of life, but what shall we say of love as a factor in government or religion? Shall love enter into all the relations between man and man? Is it a safe guide at any moment? Does it lead men to do right or to avoid doing wrong under all circumstances? Does it not on the contrary lead to cruelty, injustice and oppression, at least in a multitude of instances?

In practice love, as well as hate, is blind. It is unreasoning and unjust, because the one who loves, or the one who hates, sees things in an exaggerated or magnified form. He is in no condition to perceive things as they really are, because, for all practical purposes, his mind is in a disordered condition, so long at least as it is affected by such passions as love and hate. Those whom we love appear to us better than they are, and those whom we hate as worse than they really are. The weaknesses and defects of the one we overlook, while the faults of the other we magnify.

No class of people is so exacting, so domineering, so selfish, so suspicious, so jealous, so tyrannical as those who love. In

fact the leading characteristic of love is its intense selfishness. It is made up chiefly of sentiment and appetite. People are loved not because they are good, or virtuous or worthy, but because they happen to meet some one's interests or strike some one's fancy. Love is extremely exclusive in its preferences; it is only a certain few who are loved—not the masses, and seldom those who are deserving. We can tell best what love is by observing how it operates in practice. Fathers, for example, love their children and husbands love their wives. But how do they treat them, at least in many cases? Is it always with kindness, or even always with justice? No, such is not history, such are not the facts of the case. The model father was the old Roman father, and where has the world ever shown a more unrelenting tyrant? He loved his son so long as he worshiped, adored and obeyed his father. Otherwise the son was hated—for love and hate are very closely allied, and the transition from one to the other is much easier and more common than is usually supposed. The Roman son was often punished, sometimes inhumanly, and even in some cases he was killed, by his loving Roman father. The modern father is not so stern and so strenuous perhaps, but is this parent always just, kind, forgiving, or even humane? No, certainly not. In no other case shall we find more shameful cruelties perpetrated than in some families even at the present day. The law makes every father a tyrant, and tyrants are never just and never really kind. And so it is in too many instances in the relation existing between man and wife.

If we wish to find the most striking and interesting exemplification of a loving and faithful father, we should consult the Bible, where we find God pictured with remarkable power and distinctness. Does God love his dear children? If he does, he has a very strange way of manifesting his tender sentiments. Apparently he recognizes but one virtue on the part of the people, and that is worship and obedience. His children must not only be submissive at all times, following God's will always and not their own, but they must also be perpetually performing ceremonies and making sacrifices. His constant amusement and pastime, it would seem, is the chastisement of his children! And how cruel and unjust he is to the children of other people, or to those of other gods! He loves the children of Israel—or claims he does—and he hates with the most implacable hatred all other children. Not because they are wicked, or in any sense unworthy children, but because they are not his children. Is that not precisely the way that love operates among men always, at the present day? They love those whom they love, those that are near to them, those that worship, obey and serve them, and

everybody else they hate. Such is love, and so it always has been. That is its nature. *Love always implies hate*—love of some and hate of others. How quickly is love, even in its most highly developed state, transformed into hate ! How often do we read of one lover killing another because of the selfishness of passion ! Barry Johnson killed Kate Hassett with as little mercy as a policeman might show to a mad dog. “I loved her so,” was his excuse. Mrs. Whitten poisoned her two little daughters and then strangled herself, all for love of a suitor who objected to her children. Lottie Resseger fatally shot herself—for love of the man her older sister was about to marry.

Love is never constant—it is whimsical, fanciful, capricious in the extreme. It is never based on merit—always on fancy. The one who is loved may not change or deteriorate in the slightest degree, and yet he may cease to retain the love that he once enjoyed—and for no other reason than that the lover has changed his mind, or found some one that he likes better. How often does the husband abandon a beautiful and loving wife and bestow his new-born affections upon some miserable strumpet, just for the novelty of a change ! No, nothing is so mean in fact, so contemptible, as love ; and no one is so fickle, so heartless, and so utterly unworthy of recognition by sensible people, as the lover. Nothing that is built up solely on love can last, and that is the reason why so many marriages prove to be failures. Respect and esteem have some basis, some foundation, and they are worthy of some regard ; but love is a will-o'-the-wisp that has never yet been caught, never been examined, and therefore it has never been fully understood. Its only office is to mislead those who are too unsuspecting and too confiding.

And yet we hear a great deal about love, especially in connection with religious matters—God is love, the Bible is love, and we Christian people are love, making a very loving combination all together. But how much of this talk is really any more than twaddle ? People talk constantly about love, and yet we doubt very much if they know the genuine article when they come across it. It is very common as a disorder, and almost everybody, even the humblest has had a touch of it, more or less, some time in the course of a long life. But what is it ? Nobody knows, or if anybody knows, he is sure not to tell. Strange as it may seem, it is comparatively a modern production. The Greeks knew little or nothing of the passion ; and so it was with the ancients generally. The Orientals to-day, the natives of uncivilized countries, and many people even in enlightened Europe, have no conception of love as we find it exemplified in America. The Greeks loved art ; they loved men as well as women, be-



cause they loved art, but they had no such love as we prate about. Love in families, or family ties, as they are called, were not known among men originally as they are now known among the civilized races. Even affection for offspring, as it is found in the lower animals, is confined to a limited period, during the helplessness of the young.

We have a beautiful illustration of love in government as it is developed in our modern state. The state takes the place of a wise and powerful father. If it does not exactly love its children it certainly protects them, proceeding always upon the doctrine, absurd as it is, that the children would fall into the fire or tumble over some precipice, if the state did not thus exercise its watchful care continually and afford that protection which is deemed to be indispensable. It demands in return the constant love and devotion of all its children, and as a proof of that love and devotion, frequent sacrifices are required. Punishments—some of them of a most distressing character—are frequently inflicted, that being the way in which masters and tyrants show their affection. A love that does not sacrifice for others is no love at all. Through sacrifices alone love demonstrates its fidelity.

We have had a religion of love in the form of Christianity for nineteen hundred years, and what has been the result? What has been the history of the civilized world during that time? Have we had peace? No, we have had what Christ himself promised to the world, a sword. When was the world ever more wicked, when was the time in which more blood was shed, and when was it that human suffering and sacrifice were greater in amount and intensity than they have been during these nineteen centuries? Instead of being a religion of love, we should rather say it was a religion of tragedies and suffering. We have little besides slaughter and misery in some form to record during all this remarkable period.

What is the project of Christianity, according to the published plan of redemption? To save a few and punish the remainder. Such is love always—"many are called, but few are chosen." It is the elect, the favored few only, who are saved. The rest are damned from eternity, and they are damned to-day. Man is like an infant in the hands of irresistible Fate. By no possible effort of his own could he save himself. Good works avail not. He is either damned or not damned, according as it was from the beginning. This is the doctrine of fatalism. The Mahometans have caught the spirit of Bible teaching better than we have. They are all pronounced fatalists, every one of them. They make excellent slaves; they assume that they were born to



serve, and to suffer. That is their destiny and hence they submit meekly.

Let us consider this business of love still farther. Whom do we love? Is it everybody? No, we love only our friends and favorites, those who serve us and gratify us in some way. It is sometimes said that Christians love their enemies, but that is only in exceptional cases, when their enemies become friends. Do we love strangers? Is there not some motive of action in this life loftier and worthier than love? Is there no disinterested kindness, no sacrifice to be made or service to be performed without hope of compensation in some form? Can we not be just and generous even to those in whom we have no interest? Paid virtue, virtue that expects its reward or gratification in some form, is not virtue in the proper sense of the term. If a man at the risk of his life jumps into the water to save a drowning child which he has never seen before, is that noble action prompted in the slightest degree by love?

It should not be forgotten that love has absolutely nothing to do with justice, kindness, gentleness or even with nobleness at any time. Love has no connection whatever with proper conduct; it has no connection with merit in any form. To do good to people because we love them, is no more to our credit than it is to do good because we are paid for it. We may be paid for an unworthy action, just as we may love people who do not deserve recognition. Love never discriminates.

"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believed on him might be saved." So loved the world! How did he love the world? As those who love always do, in a partial, conditional, selfish, despotic manner. He did not love all the world. He only loved a small portion of the world, those who believed on him, submitted to him, worshiped him.

In practice, in active business affairs, in government and even in religion, love is not a principle or a feeling on which men can depend. Love is a matter of feeling and it never follows the direction which sense and reason indicates. Love is passion, and in its advanced stages it is akin to madness. What kind of a judge or what kind of a legislator would a man make who acted under the influence of love? He would not be just, he would not be reasonable. He would favor the one he loved or admired—some handsome woman perhaps, or some one that he pitied—and condemn the other party.

No, there is no place for love in practice, in the ordinary affairs of life. It might answer as a diversion for children and silly folks, but not for grown up men and women. Even when connected with marriage, it is evidently the source of much

more misery than happiness. There are so many disappointments; lovers are so fickle and they are so easily diverted in other directions; people are so fond of conquests, and then they are so selfish and so unjust! Are love matches, those matches which are supposed to be made in heaven, always happy? Is it not rather the fact that love marriages are rarely happy? What is immensely better than love at all times is justice, sense and reason. Justice and reason are things for all alike, and they are never for the few. Moreover, they have nothing to do with love. No grace, no pardon, no favoritism is desirable in any case. What is wanted is a just judge, if we are to have any judge at all, and then men will not forfeit their rights and their independence, no matter what happens.

If Christianity teaches anything, it teaches the doctrine of love, of love for everybody, and especially love for our neighbor. But no such rule, we venture to say, was ever put in practice to any extent in any age or country. It is a good topic to moralize upon, but it will not work in practice—not at least in a selfish world like ours. On a basis of love, in the form in which society now presents itself, humanity would soon go into a state of bankruptcy and decay.

Love is opposed to independence; we must love our parents who are over us, we must especially love our masters, and above all we must love God who is the father of us all. But as a matter of fact we cannot love our masters, though we may fear them. Nor can we love such a mythical and mysterious being as God—that were impossible. We cannot love ghosts and spirits, especially when we are unable to find them; we cannot love light, or sound, or air, nor even the earth itself, as the term is commonly understood. Love is essentially carnal.

Why should we love people? What should we do when we love them—what difference should we make between people whom we love and those whom we do not love? Can we not be kind to people, can we not aid them, can we not be just to them without loving them? If we have love for everybody, it must be with a different kind of affection from that with which we are now acquainted. As it is now we love only a few, a very few who are our intimate friends, and these we love so long only as we have selfish ends in view. We love them because they are our friends—we would not think of loving the friends of someone else. Love is wholly a matter of personal gratification or personal satisfaction.

The Bible would seem to tell us of a disinterested love, but no such thing ever has existed or ever could exist for a moment. The love that the Bible implies is a chimera, a matter purely of

the imagination alone, like ghosts, witches and hobgoblins. At any rate when we employ the word love in any such connection as this, we are making use of an inapt term.

As a matter of fact and of record, we really love nobody—nobody but our own dear selves. To all else we are indifferent at all times. Whatever does not affect our interests does not concern us. We love those who minister to our pleasures in some way, and that is a sensible, natural kind of love, though of course it is nothing when it is not selfish. We love people only who are handsome, who please us according to our tastes. Love is a mysterious matter of affinity between two persons, and the question of principle or of merit is not involved in the business for one moment. Let us hear no more of loving our neighbor merely because he is our neighbor—the pretence is unquestionably a fraud in all its bearings. That love should have any merit, we should love everybody, no matter how ill-looking nor whose neighbor he might be. It should be noted here that loving everybody in general is the same as loving nobody in particular.

Love of mankind is not something that can be rendered subject to the will; it cannot be controlled by commands, even though they came from God himself. In this respect it is like love of music, love of birds, love of poetry, or even love of beefsteak. The will has nothing to do with questions of that character. We like and dislike things because they are as they are and we are as we are. If we were different, or the things were different, we would certainly like something else. Our likes and dislikes have nothing to do with morals.

There is really no benefit accruing to society from the Bible doctrine of love. God loved his children, but, as we have seen, he punished them unmercifully, even unreasonably. And why did he punish them? Simply because he loved them. If he had been indifferent to them, he would have let them go their own way and made no effort to restrain them. No man takes the trouble to punish other people's children—he has all he can do to care for his own. It is his privilege and his duty to punish his children, because he loves them! He considers it good for them, necessary, and therefore eminently proper. He actually believes that sparing the rod would spoil the child. There is such a thing as being loved too well. Those who love always demand great sacrifices in return for their affections and loyalty. What a man often gets by having another man for a friend is a chance to go on his bond or lend him ten dollars in case of need. You could not refuse a friend!

Love unrequited turns into the bitterest hatred. Men do not

love for the pleasure of loving, but for the pleasure of being loved and of being served. Love is above all things a matter of self-gratification, and therefore there is nothing about it that is either commendable or praiseworthy. We love good food, but only because we desire it to eat—duck or turkey for instance. We love pictures and art generally, but only for the enjoyment that is afforded.

The one to be pitied in this world is the one whom everybody loves and admires. It is unfortunate for a woman to be called remarkably handsome, and it is equally unfortunate for a man to be exceedingly popular. What is the fate of every handsome bird, or of handsome animals generally? What is commonly the fate of the woman whose beauty is considered phenomenal? In nine cases out of ten, she is sought after continually, persecuted with attention—and perhaps petted, tempted and ruined at last. And to be popular is to encounter the same fate. How many popular men have gone down to a drunkard's grave, bankrupt both in purse and character! Between the two, it is really better to be hated too much than to be loved too much. Indeed, there is certainly something wrong about a person who is loved too much, as well as about a person who is hated too much.

There are some batteries available against hate, but absolutely none against love. Of your enemies you expect nothing, and you are seldom disappointed. It is different with friends. You often expect much from them, but when the day of actual trial comes, it is very little that you receive. To suspect love is treason—and still more to prepare to defend yourself against any possible attack from that source. Nations often meet with this very same unpleasant condition of things. But with your enemies you need not be modest at all, and if you are sensible, you will always be on your guard. You always know where to find your enemies, or at least in what direction to look for them; but with those who are supposed to love you, the case is quite different. Love is so inconstant, and people are so apt to experience a change of heart, especially where self-interest comes into play, that a man who has friends never knows just what may happen at any time.

Enmity strengthens, incites, encourages, develops. Dangers and difficulties sharpen the intellect as nothing else will. They even add strength to the muscles. With love the result is of a different character. If you love and are loved, you simply surrender and enter the hypnotic state. That is the last of you. You are absolutely nobody worth speaking about after that—at least, so long as the passion lasts. We cry out against our pains, sufferings and sorrows. But what would men amount to without



these things? What has been the history of every man who had nothing to do, no obstacles to overcome, no troubles to encounter, no enemies to resist? No man has ever yet in all this world been able to accomplish anything when there was nothing for him to do, no resistance to meet, and no labor to perform.

The author of this book is certainly not teaching a religion of love, nor any doctrine that has not for its basis something more substantial than mere affection. A religion of love implies a religion of fear—fear and love are two elements that cannot be separated. All through the Bible we are taught that we must love God, because we dread him. Love is not left to us as a matter of choice; we *must* love God any way, because we are so commanded and we are his children. We must honor our parents (that is, love them) because we dread their wrath, which is always one of the concomitants of love. While our religion is emphatically a religion of love, it must also be remembered that it is also a religion of wrath, of sorrow, of misery and of distress.

What this author teaches is the religion of good will to all men; of justice, propriety and fairness at all times; of respect for everybody's sentiments and feelings, and of a due regard for the rights of every one with whom we are called upon to associate. This course is a great deal better, a thousand times better, in practice, than that of love; it leads to peace and prosperity, so far as it is possible for such things to exist in a world constituted like ours.



## CHAPTER IX.

### CAUSE AND EFFECT.

Men are continually confounding cause and effect and mistaking one for the other. This is true not only in physics but in government, and herein lies the one great source of most of our troubles. We are continually taking nostrums to cure us of certain diseases, but we never know to a certainty whether they help us or not. We might have got well without the nostrums—and then we might not.

Causes are queer things. We think the homeopaths are correct, and if it is the medicine that produces the effect, the quantity has nothing to do with the result, and a small dose would answer just as well as a large one. If it is iron that raises a weight, it is the metal and not the quantity that does the business. Suppose it requires five pieces to raise a certain weight, which is the one that does it—four will not. Does the fifth do the whole thing? No, it requires four more with it to make the effort a success. Does the last feather break the camel's back, or must other feathers join with it? Is it the last step that takes a man to his destination, or must he have the help of the other steps? If it takes five thousand men to do a job, four thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine would make a failure of the undertaking. It requires the help of the extra man. But why should he boast? Why should any man boast? We can do nothing in this world alone. We could not even breathe unless we had the help of the atmosphere, and some other things besides.

When we come finally to have new views of causes, we shall have a truer conception of nature and her operations. We shall then have no concern about a Creator, or Great First Cause, a being of whom we know absolutely nothing and whose assistance we never receive nor require. We shall cease to think or

speak of the works of Providence, of special interposition, of divinities, demons, and spirits of all kinds.

The time has come when people should have new ideas on the subject of causes. There are no real causes; no one cause produces some other thing as a direct result. There can be only one cause for an effect; but as a matter of fact, we know that several factors always unite to produce a result, and one alone will never suffice. We speak of the causes of war, and we know that a great many events, a great many separate and independent factors, must unite to produce a war in any country. Igniting a match may be the last step in a series of steps that lead to an explosion. But the match alone cannot be called the cause of the trouble, since it is well known that matches properly handled and kept in their place never lead to accidents.

Men talk rapturously about causes, and yet have they anything like a clear and definite notion of the nature of causes? We speak of the cause of a disease, when in fact there is no cause of a disease—no single cause, which a cause must be, if it properly is a cause. Perhaps ten thousand things conspire to produce a certain disease, if it is produced at all. We sometimes say that we raise corn, but that is a sort of allegorical expression which has no real signification. We do not raise corn—no one does that. We merely help to bring the conditions together that enable corn to grow, and to eliminate any one of the conditions or causes would spoil the job. We tell of what this man or that man has done or accomplished, when as a matter of fact no man ever accomplishes anything through his own unaided exertions.

It must be noted that we speak recklessly and inaccurately at all times. We speak nothing truly. We delight in hyperboles. If what we say is partially true, that is as much as can generally be expected. We say a man builds a machine, but as a matter of fact he really builds or produces very little of it. He merely puts parts together according to a certain plan or arrangement, and that is all. He does not produce even a particle of the material, and the power that moves the machine never emanates from himself. Every mechanic is at best merely an agent or an instrument of nature. Men say God does this or that, and electricity and the spirits do certain other things. But people talk at random, and there is about as much sense in their utterances in such cases as there is in the cackling of geese or the croaking of frogs.

All the causes that we contemplate—all the natural causes as we call them—are those spirits of old, or demons, which in olden times were supposed to lie concealed in certain things. The

whole theory of causes comes from the Bible, a fruitful source from which many fables have been derived. Gravity is a cause, a mysterious and unknown agent; so are cohesion and combustion; and in fact all the phenomena of nature, according to ancient doctrines, are the work of spirits.

If there is a cause, it must be a matter of will; a cause implies design, a First Great Cause. But what is it that causes the will, the motive? That is something that we cannot determine. We are not able to go back of the motive. We know we did not create it, and we cannot control it. So we are not responsible for our motives and hence we are not responsible for our actions.

It is futile to discuss the question of causes, seeing that really there are no causes. There are occasions, opportunities, conditions—but there are no real causes. In all cases, the damage that is occasioned by causes comes from an unfortunate combination of circumstances. It is not the stone on the track, or the putting it on, that does the work, in case of an accident, but the train's coming along at an inopportune moment, and perhaps also the fact that no guard was present to remove the stone in season. And if some one is killed, it happens because he is on the train, and because he is in the wrong car. There is no end of causes, if you start to examine the case critically and carefully. It cannot be the medicine alone that cures a man, or it would cure every patient every time. But if a man is cured, it depends upon very many things—his own particular condition, his treatment, his age, the weather, and many other circumstances. It cannot be gravity that draws bodies down to the center of the earth, for the boat that floats on the water and the balloon that rises in the air do not fall, though gravity acts in their cases as well as in others.

The power that brings about action in bodies resides in the bodies themselves. Two bodies cannot act upon each other, for it is well known that they never touch each other, and most certainly one cannot enter the limits of the other. The seed that finally germinates may have lain dormant, awaiting the favorable moment, perhaps for centuries. The power is there and cannot be destroyed, but it cannot proceed with its development without help from sources outside of itself.

Not only are there no true causes, but there are no true results. Things are not caused, not produced, and they are not created. They always existed. What is, must have been from the beginning. The train that passes us at any moment was somewhere else an hour before, and it will be in another place an hour later. When the sun goes down, it does not cease to exist; we may not see it, but people on other portions of the

earth see it. And again, when to-morrow comes, it is not a new sun that has been created or produced by some cause, some special interposition of Providence, but merely the same sun coming along in the natural course of things. What is there mysterious about the whole proceeding?

It must not be forgotten that every case of cause and effect, according to the prevailing theory, must be a new creation, a special interposition by Providence. We act upon the assumption that nature cannot do its own work, but that there is a God, Providence, outside of nature, that does all that is to be done. He is the one Great Cause acting constantly and forever! That is simply astounding! As a matter of fact there is no such God, and consequently there are no cases of cause and effect. There are no special visitations; things come and go in the natural course of things, and never in any other manner.

Let us cease to worry over the why and the wherefore of things. It belongs to a child to ask such questions. When we explain things, we merely state them over in another form. Why does a body fall, why is flame hot and marble cold? Why do some people live and other people die? Any simple person can ask questions, but it is not every wise man that can answer them. There are some things that men do not know and never will know.

It will be noticed that this question of cause and effect is identical with the question of Providence. If there is no real cause and effect, as we have seen there is not, there cannot be a Providence, for there is nothing for Providence to do. Indeed, we now begin to realize that, of the great multitude of things that Providence is supposed to have done, not one can properly be passed to his credit. And so with the supposed achievements of man—they all come to naught. No man can properly be said to do anything, for he does nothing alone. At best man can only do what is possible, what circumstances allow him to do. No man can boast of his power, for he has none. For any and every achievement that he claims as his own, he needs the support of nature and the co-operation of the world.

We shall soon cease to talk about what we have done—what this man has done, what any man has done, or what anything has done. As a matter of fact, no man of himself does, or can do, anything. How absurd! We say a doctor cures a man. Shall he give no credit to God, to nature, to the climate, to the patient himself, to the co-operation of circumstances, and perhaps to the effect of the medicine? How ridiculous is the claim as to what we do, when the truth is that, properly speaking, we never do anything—certainly we never do anything alone, which

we must do, if we do it at all. What reward shall we claim? Why, a man could not raise his hand without a thousand conspiring and co-operating circumstances to favor and assist him, such as the opportunity to raise it, the occasion or inclination to raise it, the motive to raise it, and finally the power to raise it, as well as the knowing how to raise it.

If we could see and understand the realities of this world, we should perceive that there are perhaps a million of different elements or influences that enter into so simple an operation as the raising of one's hand. Take for instance the forces that send a ball in a certain direction. No one alone, or a dozen, but a thousand forces from different directions enter into that one movement of the ball. These thoughts are not dreams, they are not wild vagaries. They are facts which every thinking and intelligent man understands and concedes. A cord looks simple enough, but it is made up of innumerable strands. The stream of water that flows gently by looks like a very simple thing. But it is made up of a million subordinate little streams, each striving to make its way on its own account. At a distance it looks like a single thing; on closer inspection, it is found to be made up of an indefinite number of individual streams of a lower order.



## CHAPTER X.

### EXPRESSION AND RELATION.

What is an expression? How are expressions made—through what medium and in what manner? These, and all similar questions, are not easy to answer; and when an answer is attempted, it is not generally satisfactory. The idea of expression of any kind is a late development in the human mind, and its true character has never yet been clearly understood. Man in his natural, uncultivated state has little knowledge of expression. He hardly realizes what it is. His collection of words is small, because he has few ideas. He hardly understands that words express anything, in the sense that civilized men understand the term. Even of pictures he has but an imperfect conception, unless they are very rude and simple. In this respect natives are like the lower animals; they have almost no idea at all of pictures and reflection. They know nothing of perspective and very little of the effect of shading.

It is clear enough that there is no such thing as expression or representation in the sense in which we understand the term. We know that there is and can be no connection of any kind between separate things; and that if they were connected, they would not be separate. We know that nothing has any power of expression, certainly not the power of expressing something entirely outside of itself. We say a sentence expresses, but we shall find, when we come to examine the subject closely and carefully, that all the expression of which we talk so much is in our minds. The words of which a sentence are composed are each distinct individualities. How can they be forced to unite in such a manner as to produce an expression, or even to represent an idea? Words are nothing but sounds, or if written or printed, they are merely the signs of sounds. There is no real difference in character between words in language and the letters

and signs that are so dextrously manipulated in mathematical operations. In both cases they are merely arbitrary or conventional signs used to aid man in his calculations and reflections. Their realm is the spiritual, not the material.

Pictures are closely allied to words and signs. A picture does not really express or represent anything outside of itself. To say that it is connected with some other object, or represents it in any way, is an expression that is wholly gratuitous. A likeness may represent this man or that man, or some other man. How shall we ever know which? We never can know except by inquiring of the artist, and with him it is merely a matter of purpose or intention. How shall we ever know that a picture represents a horse? Not only in the case of children, but also in the case of adults, pictures must be labeled before we can know exactly what they are meant to represent. Can we get an idea of what we have never seen or heard, even from a picture? Only so far as there is a resemblance to something with which we are acquainted.

No likeness is a true likeness in any case; the best are full of defects, and most of them are ideal, rather than real. And whether we see a horse in a picture or not, depends very much upon ourself, upon the state of our mind and our advancement in science. A horse might look at a picture without having the slightest suspicion that it was meant to represent him. He might even see his reflection in a mirror without realizing what it was connected with. It is not clear that a horse notices a reflection, though dogs sometimes do.

It must not be overlooked that expressions of all kinds are largely, if not wholly, in the mind of the observer. An Israelite sees in a page of Hebrew what a Greek does not see, though both look at the same page. What does such a page express? Nothing. In the case of the Jew it develops thoughts or ideas by association. In the case of the Greek not familiar with the Hebrew there is no such experience. So in reading a page of our language. We see in it at one time what we did not at another; and another man reading the same page would find in it a great many things that, to our mind, are quite imperceptible.

To get an impression, it requires an observer as well as the thing observed. Neither alone will answer. The printed page has no value, no expression, if it remains unseen, or if it is seen by one who is not in a condition to interpret it. So it is with everything in nature. One thing expresses as much as another—everything expresses—but the conditions must be favorable. There must be an interpreter and something to be interpreted.

What one man finds in the Bible, or in any other book, differs

greatly from what another man finds there—and if he does not read, he will not find anything at all. Some people can look at the Egyptian hieroglyphics and get thoughts and information from them. Not so with others who are not acquainted with the character and meaning of these signs. *Words, pictures, sketches—all these are mere signs calling up ideas already existing in the minds of men.* People who have no knowledge, no ideas of their own, never learn and never derive any benefit from what they read or see. All objects in nature perform, to a greater or less extent, about the same office that words and pictures do. All express, all indicate, all are the occasion for the development of ideas in the minds of those who observe.

So it is also in music, or in art. To an Arab, Arabic music is a source of delight, but to a European it is merely a painful racket. The ancient Greeks had their music, and they deemed it charming. But we to-day would call it very crude and even intolerable.

Nothing, it must be borne in mind, has any fixed character or expression of its own. An Indian reads a great deal more in footprints, or in other traces, than a European could possibly find in them. It is all in ourselves, our training, our acquirements and capacity. It is well known that the artist sees a hundred beauties in his picture that the common observer never perceives. As already intimated, there is no picture of a thing—it is merely a sign or sketch to call to mind a certain thing of which we had some knowledge or conception before.

All things are signs. The flag, which is merely a piece of cloth with colors, is a sign, a symbol: three links call to mind the Odd Fellows order; the letters F. & A. M., the Masonic fraternity. U. S. means United States, for us, quite as much as the words themselves do. A certain sign, \$, means dollars, No. signifies number and so on. They have no connection with other objects, but by custom or common consent, the one is associated with the other, the sign with the thing signified. Things express simply through suggestions which awaken thoughts in our minds. So music expresses, so gestures and dancing express, so words express, and so everything expresses.

We dwell much upon intention, motives, purposes, but it is impossible to connect them with results. What has intention to do with any matter? Men are concerned about results or effects, and not at all about intentions. What a man's intentions were in using certain words in a particular instance can have no effect upon the character or expression of the words themselves. They mean what they mean, but not always the same thing to different men. If a man draws a sketch of a horse, but meant

it for a pig, that does not help matters in the least. His intentions do not enter into the case. The question is, what does the sketch actually represent? So in speaking, if a man says "horse," what matters it if he meant "cow?" Again, give a man \$10. What is it for? How shall the world ever know? Intentions have nothing to do with the case. Intention or purpose or thought can never connect two actions or two objects that have no connection. Saying a thing is so, or that such and such were the intentions, determines absolutely nothing in this or in any other case. Saying there is a man in the moon, or that electricity is a current that runs through or along a wire, does not make it so. If we give a man a sum of money, that is all there is of it. Nothing we can do or say can characterize it or determine it in any way. So we say a man goes to Albany. His going has no relation to Albany. He merely goes and keeps going.

What signs indicate, what they express, depends wholly upon *what we know*. If we know nothing, they express or indicate nothing. It is like a case of concerted signals. To outsiders who do not know the code, they are meaningless. So with all signs. To some they mean much, to others little, and to others still they mean nothing. Alone there is nothing that means anything. Signs alone have no signification—they are only for those who have the code, for those who know. The meaning is wholly in the observer. Such is language, such is expression of all kinds. We see a building. Is it a house, a barn, a seminary or a castle? The building alone does not reveal its character. Before we can decide that, we must have knowledge, we must know its uses.

There are no real likenesses of things, no images, as there are no parts of things. What we call images are unconnected and independent things, like other objects, and like the things which are supposed to be represented. A statue is no more an image than a tombstone is. Both are simply chiseled forms of marble, and absolutely nothing more. If we find a head in marble, how shall we ever know whose head it is? It is nobody's head. It may resemble Cæsar, and even then not be Cæsar's. Nature paints flowers, and men paint flowers, but the flowers that nature paints have nothing to do with the flowers (so called) that men paint. There is hardly a resemblance in this case—certainly no identity or connection.

Words, all words, are ambiguous, because they really express nothing. They have no well defined character—they have no meaning. They are quite conventional. *They express one thing to one man and another thing to another man; they simply call*



up by suggestion different ideas in each case. Take the word "horse," "virtue," "trunk." Alone they mean nothing. There are many kinds of horses, virtues, trunks. We must have some other sign, some determinative by which we can ascertain which is intended. The dictionary does not tell us what a word means. It only gives a few of its meanings, and leaves the inquirer to figure the matter out for himself. So the word "sweet," "love," and indeed all words, have many meanings or applications. Words that mean several things must really mean nothing. Again, words are mere tags or marks to designate things, just as we call this building "A" or "No. 3." All the meaning that words have is what we attribute to them.

Every step we take in our inquiries reminds us that there is in nature no such thing as connections or relations. All things that exist are *unconnected, unrelated and independent*. A man strikes a blow, and a month or a year later, we strike a blow. How could we say with any propriety that the two acts or events have any connection or relation? And still we are constantly assuming that things are connected and related, that this is the cause of that or the effect of this, that the blow is in revenge or compensation, or a punishment for some antecedent act. Connections and relations are ideas merely with which we amuse ourselves. We connect stars in the heavens with imaginary lines and construct figures of bears, goats and other animals, but these images or figures are wholly and solely in our minds.

So in music, each note is independent and really discordant: one note is higher than another, and the two really have no relation or connection whatever. The same is true of two different keys. Again, the note on a flute is one thing, and the same note on a violin is another thing, though called by the same name: and on the piano it has still another character, and yet the three instruments may be played in concert and make what we call symphony! Harmony is said to be an adaptation of parts to each other. How can they be adapted, in a case where each is known to be independent of the other? So we observe that many objects form a landscape. But where is the harmony between the great number of independent things that unite to produce the effect? Harmony and concord, order and system, are wonderful things. How can they be said to exist, when all things are known to be different and disconnected? Harmony springs from discord in all cases, and so good comes from evil in other instances.

Men cannot possibly get correct ideas on any subject. Indeed, there are no correct ideas. Men's ideas come from suggestion, from association, from what they see and hear, and especi-



ally from language. But what medium could be more unsafe, more imperfect or more unsatisfactory every way than that of language? Words really express nothing. As we have seen, they are merely signs, which some interpret one way and some another. A sentence is merely an assemblage of independent conventional signs which together have no more of what might be called true expression than there is to be found in the collective signs of an algebraic equation or in so many pieces of wood. If a word expresses nothing, how could a collection of words be expected to do any better?

No word signifies precisely the same thing for any two persons. Every word has a great many different meanings and applications. The dictionary gives some of those meanings, but it rarely tells what a word means in a certain place or connection. How shall a man know exactly what a word means in a particular sentence? As a matter of fact, he never does. He gets an approximation, he conjectures—that is all. How shall he ever know what the writer intended when he used a particular word? He never can know. The writer and the reader are practically as far apart as the earth is from the sun. Each has his own thoughts, his own thoughts only, and they never can understand each other. People can never be brought together.

With such an imperfect means of communication as we have, is it any wonder that error prevails, that we are never fully understood, and that whether we read or listen, we get at most only an approximation to the truth in any case? Is it any wonder that no two people read the Bible alike, that no two judges interpret the laws like? This all arises from the imperfection of our means of communication, joined to the weaknesses of the one who interprets, to his want of knowledge, his prejudices, his want of care, his whims, his interests, his passions, his feelings, his health, all of which things have a direct influence upon a man's thoughts and understanding, and finally upon his judgment.

When we consider the imperfect and unreliable means of communication that is to be found in every direction, together with the well known carelessness of men in seeing, hearing and understanding, what wonder should there be that we find so little truth in this world? We do not know what truth is, and we would not have the means of properly expressing it, if we did know. We have the erroneous impression that we obtain knowledge solely through books and language. The fact is that everything around us has its expression and gives us knowledge. There are "sermons in stones," and "books in the running brooks." The American savage, who is a keen observer, gets

more valuable information from a few footprints, or from other apparently unimportant signs, than a learned man would obtain from a chapter in some profound work. This same savage can carry on an extended conversation with his fellow, by means of signs, without uttering a single word, and two mutes in civilized life could do the same thing in a little different manner.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### OUR CONFUSED IDEAS.

The language we use and the terms we employ show clearly that our ideas are confused and our notions of things are far from being correct. We are constantly stating things as we know they are not. We say the road runs to Albany, when we know that it never moves. It stays where it is, no part but the remotest end ever touching Albany, and it is well known that the end of a road is never the road itself. We say a cable stretches from one place to another. But how can anything stretch or extend from one place to another place? How can anything be in two places at the same time? It is utterly impossible. If a man's feet are in one place and his head in another, where is the man really? We say the river runs, but it does not run. Even the water does not run, it flows. It is animals that run. We say the winds howl, but in fact it is animals that howl. And so it goes on indefinitely. None of our expressions are accurate; none will bear criticism or close inspection. As said before, we are always saying what we do not mean. We say that messages travel from one place to another. As a matter of fact, nothing travels in such cases. When we say we send a telegraph despatch to New York, we do not mean it. Nothing starts here and travels to New York. We simply have the power of developing the message in New York. So in talking we do not transfer our thoughts to other people. We merely develop their own thoughts. No light travels from the sun every morning. The sun merely develops light in the earth's atmosphere. The new wireless telegraphy demonstrates these facts. It is like the ringing of a bell. The bell sends out no sounds, no message, in any particular direction, but every one within a certain distance can hear it. So in wireless telegraphy.

The power is in the air, in the earth, in the people. The reason why we do not need any wires, is because we are already connected with every spot on earth, as in the case of the sun. We simply need finer, more delicate and more powerful instruments.

We have confused ideas on matters of identity. Can the same person be at two different times any more than in two different places? Are the child in infancy and the man in old age one and the same person? That is a grave question. What constitutes identity? Can a person or thing change in any respect and remain the same individual as before? We are accustomed to use antiquated terms and we cling to obsolete ideas. The prevailing names of things of the present day were given to them hundreds and thousands of years ago, and now when we have different conceptions of their character, new terms should be applied to them. We say darkness falls, when it does not fall; so we say the light breaks, when unquestionably it does nothing of the kind. Many things go by wrong names to-day. Does a thing have extent? Does God, does virtue, does goodness, does life have extent? How can a body, a thing, be at several different places at one and the same time? An acre of ground, a square mile, the earth; are they things, or are they made up of things? Have things no limits; have they any limits? What are things? Where is the thing, the house, the horse, the elephant, for instance? They embrace a great many different points and cannot be found wholly in any one of them. There is a mystery in all this that is not easily solved. If we touch the horse's ear, do we touch the animal itself? If we touch a man's garment or the hair of his head, do we touch the man himself? Is a man wholly concentrated in one of the hairs of his head, or in the hem of his garment? Again, we ask, what are the real boundaries of a man? Where is it that we shall find him, and where shall we find him not? How can we transfer to a man what we possess, especially knowledge? Where is the man? How shall we reach him? How shall we part with the knowledge we have gained? There are really no transfers in nature from one thing to another. Such an idea is based on a false philosophy. Heat is not transferred; sound is not transferred; knowledge is not transferred. Effects are simply developed in bodies. Things never gain what they did not possess before, neither do they lose.

We are constantly hearing about things that are connected. How? If they were connected, they would be one. If a third thing—a cord, a chain, or a conjunction—connects things, it must separate them, for what connects things also keeps them apart. Again, how could things be connected? How could two

ever become one, and at the same time remain two? When the connection is perfect, the link must disappear, and with it all idea of connection.

How can we change or transform things? We can replace and destroy things—nothing more. How can we add to or increase a thing? When we add to a thing, the thing itself remains just what it was before. If we add five to two, does that make two more than it was before? How can we add to an ounce to make it more than an ounce, or to a quart to make it more than a quart? To increase or decrease a number would change its whole character and render it what it was not before. Take a stick two feet in length. How could we stretch it and make it longer than two feet? And if we did stretch it, would that be adding to it in any way? How could we shorten a stick? By cutting off a piece. But that destroys the stick. No, change of things in any manner is impossible, and the term as we use it has no real meaning. Perhaps we may destroy, but we cannot change.

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Let us consider at length our confused ideas about numbers. Numbers have no fixed values of their own. Their value depends upon location, order or rank. Thus six may be simply six ones, or sixty or a six thousand, according to the order or series to which it belongs.

Number, like quantity, quality, and properties of all kinds, is purely a matter of imagination and there is no actual, individual existence to which it corresponds. As we have already indicated, things as individuals have no number at all, beyond one, which is properly not a number. If a man has only one dollar, he has no number of dollars. So things have no extent. A thing that extends must cover two or more points at one time, that is, be in two places at one time. If a bridge extends from A to B, where is it really located? In neither place, nowhere. In fact a bridge does not extend or stretch itself any more than other objects do. No body properly speaking extends or has extent.

So it is impossible for things to have quantity. Can there be more or less of a thing, or part of a thing? A thing that is less than the whole thing is no thing at all—it is nothing. A dollar which is one cent short is not a dollar, it is nothing. It is not even ninety-nine cents, for there are no cents in a dollar. We sometimes say a hundred cents make, or are equivalent to, a dollar, but that is not strictly true. No, the fact is things are mere points, they have neither extent nor quantity. The moment we



get extent or quantity, we get things that are made of pieces or parts, and nature affords nothing of the kind. Neither do things exist at different times; for a body to be at two different times is the same as its being in two different places, which is impossible. When a body is at A it cannot be at B; when it is in the year five it cannot be in the year twenty.

Things cannot properly be considered as having qualities or properties. Properties are what we assign to things—things have no properties otherwise. We conceive of qualities only by comparing things. Everything in quality is, the same as in the case of numbers, a matter of relative value. We say a man is tall, comparing him with men who are short; we say marble is cold, comparing it with other objects not so cold. Things have no qualities save those which men assign to them. Where there is no comparison, qualities are not to be thought of. We speak of qualities, but they are only things to be talked about. Where are the qualities? A man may have a shirt or a hat, and this may be taken from him and he would still survive. But if we take the tallness from a tall man, what becomes of him—or the coldness from marble, or the sweetness from sugar?

Again, comparison is never justifiable. We can only compare things that are alike, that belong to the same class, that are characterized by no differences, that are identical. But there are no such things in the world. All things are unique, and therefore they cannot be grouped or classified, without ignoring radical differences. We compare men with men, assuming that they are alike; but not men with trees or animals, which are different. We may say a tree is taller than a man, but that is merely comparing length in one case with the length in another case. We cannot count things that are unlike. We can have five wagons and ten horses, but we cannot group them and get fifteen of anything. So with our adjectives. They belong only to things of the same class. We say this man and that man, or black men and white men, not this man and that book, or a white man and a black dog. They cannot be grouped or compared, they cannot be brought together.

These positions are highly metaphysical in character, but they are nevertheless very important, as we shall find when we come to consider the questions of everyday life. Our remarks thus far must indicate how inaccurate we are in the language we use in writing or speaking. Our ideas are not founded in truth to begin with. We proceed constantly upon the assumption that things can be changed and still remain what they were before—that they can be increased, diminished, extended, contracted, multiplied, divided, and the like, which is actually impossible.



Fractions are parts only in a certain sense—they are never actual existences, but merely products of the imagination. In all the realms of nature, there are no parts of things, save as they are found in the minds of men. Some things are relatively smaller than others, but they are not therefore parts of other things. No matter how diminutive or insignificant things may be, *they are always complete and distinct in their individuality*. A fly is as perfect and as wonderfully made as an elephant.

One-third has the same relation to one that a unit has to three. The ratio, the relative size, is one-third, or as one to three, but one-third is counted in one direction, while three has its location in the opposite direction. The relation of these extremes, one-third and three, is indicated by nine or one-ninth. In decimals, the tens count to the left from the point, and tenths count towards the right. Between tens and tenths, the relation is indicated by one hundred, the square of ten.

What we have said of thirds and tenths applies to all fractions. All fractions are whole numbers of a different series, or location; and they are always of a smaller size or less value than what is called a whole number. So all numbers are properly fractions, because they are relatively smaller than some other number. Thus, two is one-third of six, and five is one-fourth of twenty. A peck, a quarter, is a whole thing quite as much as a bushel is—so an inch is one-twelfth of a foot, and an ounce is one-sixteenth of a pound. But it is not true that there are four pecks in a bushel, any more than there are four quarter dollars in a whole dollar. Pecks and bushels, and quarters and dollars, are as distinct from each other as any two things could possibly be, and neither one is the measure or part of the other. It is not true that numbers or things have two halves, or four quarters, or eight eighths. The half of eight is one number, four, not two fours; the eighth of sixteen is two, not eight twos. No number is made up of two halves or four fourths; it is not made up of parts, it has no parts, except in the imagination of men. Four quarters of a dollar would never make a dollar; nor would a dollar make four quarters. Our silver quarter is a typical fraction—it is a dollar of one-fourth the usual size. These are things that have no connection whatever, and by no possible process could one be transformed into the other. As soon as a thing is broken into fragments or fractions, no matter how regular or exact they may be, the thing itself ceases to exist. Nor could the parts be again united to make a whole.

It must be remembered that no number applies to more than one thing. Groups are themselves single things; ten or a hundred is singular quite as much as one is. Suppose we have ten

books lying before us. Does the number ten apply to any one of them, or to any five or eight of them? It only applies to the group as a whole. Numbers are a very late development. Savages have no such idea of numbers as we have. Like children, many cannot count, and of those who can, many cannot go beyond the most elementary numbers. Things, as we have already indicated, do not have numbers. The idea is confined solely to our mind. The original idea was not four, or ten, but the fourth or tenth thing—a thing may be the fourth or tenth in order of location or appearance, but there are no things to which “four” or “ten” can properly apply. Our figures were letters in their origin. The Hebrews used letters, and they had no figures. “A” indicated one, because it was first in the alphabet; “C” indicated three, because it was the third letter, and so on. The Greeks followed the same system. Our Arabic or Hindoo figures were not in use till about the eleventh century. Even the Romans used letters. A single stroke, 1, was one, two strokes, two, three strokes, three, precisely as we hold up three fingers to indicate three. Thus, three is only so many ones repeated. The Greeks used *b* for two, and *b* marked for one-half, and the same with other letters. They evidently appreciated the fact that, so far as number is concerned, there is no essential difference between three and one-third.

Mathematics has developed into a great science, but there is nothing in nature to correspond with any of its results or any of its operations. There are no numbers of things, as we have already seen, and no fractions or fragments of things. There is no such operation in nature as adding things, or subtracting, multiplying or dividing things, no increasing, diminishing, or changing things in any manner—no products, no transformation. Mathematics starts with a fiction, an assumption, or rather with several fictions or several assumptions, and then it proceeds boldly as if there could be no possible question about the premises. Most of the arithmetical propositions are not founded in fact. If one cow is worth twenty-five dollars, what would two be worth? Indeed, who knows? Because one cow is sold for ten dollars, it does not follow that two would be sold for twenty dollars. There is no connection between the propositions. There is no relation. If one man can do a certain amount of work, how much can ten men do? How shall we know? It all depends upon the men and the circumstances of the case—their industry, their ability, the weather, etc. There are no duplicates in nature, and so the whole basis of arithmetical calculation falls to the ground.

The foundations of geometry, it may be added, are just as

unstable as those of arithmetic and algebra. In all the demonstrations peculiar to this science, the reasoning applied is based upon unsound premises. Geometry deals exclusively with lines and surfaces that are imaginary, and with forms and figures which nowhere exist. They are not found at least in practical life. There are wheels in practice, but there are no circles. There are no globes that correspond with theory. The world is not a globe—far from it. Triangles and squares, and polygons and ellipses, and even radii and perimeters, are things to write and talk about, but when they come to be grasped and handled, they vanish, like Creusa's ghost, into thin air. They cannot endure close inspection. The figures of geometry do not grow in the woods and fields; they are found only in the minds of men. It is the shell, the shadow of things, that geometry treats of—not the substance. Geometry may teach the learner how to reason, but not always how to reason correctly nor to be sure of reaching sound conclusions in any case.

The axioms on which the whole fabric of demonstration is based are usually either tautological or untrue. To say that parallels will not meet, no matter how far they may be produced, is to say that parallels are parallel; that the whole is greater than any of its parts, is the same as saying "greater than what is less;" that the whole is equal to the sum of its parts, is false, since a whole in parts is different from a whole as a whole. "The halves of things," we are told, "are always equal." This may be the case in theory but not in practice. There are no halves of things, certainly no exact halves, in practice. Where are the halves of a horse, a tree, a stone, a wagon, a mowing machine, a steam engine, a book, a town? How could two halves be exactly equal in any case? It is said a straight line proceeds to a certain point, but it never does. There are no straight or other lines to be found, and they never proceed. The line we draw with a pen or pencil is not a line, but merely a representative of a line. All the figures produced in geometry are pure images, precisely like those found in heathen mythology. They cannot be handled, they cannot be applied to each other, they cannot be measured. They cannot be added, subtracted, multiplied or divided. Geometry deals with space, and space is a shadow, a dream.

## CHAPTER XII.

### IDENTITY AND INDIVIDUALITY.

What constitutes an individual? Where is the line of demarkation between this thing and that thing? And back of all this, what is a thing? Has it any limits? Is what we call the outer form, or the outer shell, of things, the true limit of things? The form in which things appear to us is merely an illusion. It is evanescent. It exists only for an instant; every object in nature, like the clouds, is changing its form continually. Some things, like the hills, change slowly, but we know that even they are changing constantly. There is no such thing as rest in this world; it is the end of motion, it is one of the conditions of motion. Bodies are simply the material of which things are composed. But material has no limits; it belongs to the universe.

It is very difficult indeed to draw any proper line of distinction between any two objects which we regard as separate and distinct individuals. There is really no proper line in such cases. We cannot, for instance, distinguish between the past and the future. They are separated by an inappreciable moment of time, the present. The present exists but for one moment; in an instant it is a thing of the past and its place is taken by what before was the future. Continuity is never destroyed. The plow of five thousand years ago is merely the antiquated or original form of what is known as the plow of to-day. We add to things, we modify them—but we never transform or annihilate them. A plow always remains a plow, no matter how many stages it may have passed through, nor for how long a period it may have been known. The people of Britain, passing through all the changes and vicissitudes of two thousand years, still remain the people of Britain. No matter how many importations or deportations there may have been, while passing from a state of barbar-



ism to civilized life, the people continue to be Britons still. A book is called a book, even while in its original form of a roll. So we call a book a volume, which means a roll, from the Latin *volvo*, to turn or roll. It will be perceived that the name and idea do not change, no matter how often or to what extent the form changes. A gun is a gun to-day, though it is not at all like the gun of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Take the words coat, hat, hose, or even the words temple, house, or other words for illustration. A house was a mere hut originally, with a single room; now it is a palace with many rooms and a great array of furniture, but still it remains a house. So we speak of a tree, through all its various stages of existence and with all its transformations, from the feeble shrub to the sturdy oak, simply as a tree. We call the small mountain stream a river; and after it has increased to ten times its volume, and it has received the waters of a dozen other important streams, we call it a river still—and to our minds it is the very identical stream that we noticed in the mountains!

To speak intelligently, there are no single things. All the things of which we have knowledge are made up of other things, or of parts of things. They are groups or compounds. Things have extent, and if they have extent, they must have points and parts. To the mind of man every unit has fractions, and these may be carried to infinity. The tree has leaves and branches and bark and roots; so the human body is composed of organs, each working independently, and yet in concert with all the others. The heart, the liver, the lungs, the kidneys, even the hairs of the head are separate individualities, like the leaves and branches of trees, and they all have offices which are peculiarly their own. As the cord is made of threads and the threads of fibers, so everything is made up of subordinate individualities, and so we shall find the case to be wherever we go. There are no units; or rather, units always consist of groups. When we regard a thing as a unit, we simply overlook its parts.

Every individual is an organization in which coordination and subordination prevails, precisely as we find in government, or as in every case where we have organization. The human body is as good an illustration as we shall find of an individual thing, and that we know is highly organized. Without organization, and without coordination and subordination implied, nobody could for a moment exist. Every body must have a head, or something which takes the place of a head, a directing center, precisely as in the case of the human body. Life itself affords an instance of organization; and life cannot exist without organization. If things exist, they must have parts; and if they



have parts, some of them must be subordinate, for it is not possible that all parts shall have the same place and the same office.

We usually date our existence from the day that we were born, from the date when the shell was broken, and the chick first emerged from its place of concealment. But clearly enough the chick must have existed long before that. The breaking of the shell, the being born, was only a simple and unimportant step in the process. The child, the offspring, is being born really weeks and months before it finally is born. Being born, as we call it, is only an ordinary and natural step or stage in the offspring's development. It consumed food and grew just as well before birth as after, and just as much after birth as before. As a being, it was as fully and completely organized at one time as another. There never was or is a time when any being was or is not a being, a complete being, though some organs at first may be rudimentary.

Let us not forget that the same man is being born and dies as a matter of fact every moment. Dying and being born are processes that never begin, never end. No one can conceive of a time or make any estimate as to the period when the offspring began to be, began to assimilate, began to grow. To grow is to be born; the more we assimilate from the world in which we find ourselves, the more we become something different from what we were before. Animals change their nature according to what they eat. A man's character is affected by what he consumes. Every being resembles in some respects the things that constitute his daily food.

As we have seen, the existence in the shell was only one stage, one form of our existence. There must have been other stages, other forms, at some earlier period. But those stages of which we know nothing can have no concern for us, and we have no more to do with our existence after death than with our existence before birth. What interest could we have in stages over which we have no control? The past and the future are as nothing to us. They are both outside of our realm; they belong to another world. It is idle to bother with mere fancies and fictions, when there are so many important things that may be called the realities of life.

There are two kinds of existence, the conscious and the unconscious—one beginning a while after birth and the other a while before death. But whether it be one or the other, our existence goes on forever and forever. It has always gone on; as we have before said, there is no beginning nor end to either birth or death. There is not an individual in existence to-day

who was not in the world even before creation dawned. Creation itself was only a birth, a forming and presenting of what already existed. Creation out of nothing it is not possible for any one to comprehend. Man has never known anything of the kind. Every being is infinite in time and space. Beings have no limits. They embrace everything, they are everything. They are coexistent and coextensive with the universe. Christ was in the world, and the world was in him. But not Christ alone. The same is true of all beings, all things.

Consciousness is by no means essential to existence. Most of the existence with which we are acquainted is unconscious existence. In fact our own conscious existence is but a moment compared with that part which is unconscious. All matter is unconscious. Only a small portion of the world presents forms even of life.

Growth is reproduction, and this goes on all through life. When this process ceases, the individual dies. Production and reproduction are one and the same thing. We could not have birth without death, nor death without birth. They are remote ends of the same process. Without birth no one would die.

What is the conception or begetting of a new being? It is certainly not a creation, but a development by fertilization of the maternal germ. There is no creation to be found in nature. A grain may lie dormant for an age, and an egg for years, and then, under favorable conditions, begin life anew and proceed with its arrested development. This is what we call birth. It is properly a process in which the being is completing its career and hastening on to decay and death once more.

The process of birth and growth is curious, and most of it is concealed from our view. But things are strange to us and mysterious only because we are ignorant. Is the grain a mere continuance of the plant from which it was developed? The foetus has a little food stored up in the beginning for its support; after a while it grows by assimilating and appropriating from the world around. The plant feeds as the animal feeds, selecting what it wants and rejecting what it finds distasteful. Is this not will, calculation, reasoning?

Again, what is death? Surely it is nothing strange, nothing anomalous. We are dying every day, every moment. We are continually casting from our bodies waste or effete matter, secretions, and excretions of all kinds—all which at one time were essential parts of our system. Our hair and teeth drop out; scales peel off from our skin and we are changing constantly. What becomes of us finally? All there is of us is the matter of which we are composed and this is changing continually. We

repeat, what becomes of us finally? Amid all these transformations always going on, do we still remain the same person? We are continually taking from the world and giving back—we are being born and dying. When we die at last, we simply restore all that we possess. That, and that alone, is death. We merely loosen our grip on what never belonged to us. There is nothing at all anomalous in this proceeding. Dying and being born are two extremes—and they are not so very far apart either. To be born is to appropriate, assimilate; to die is to return our accumulation to the great reservoir from which it was originally taken. All our life we are appropriating, accumulating.

Are the living changed into the dead, or are the dead and the living different beings? Is the bud converted into a leaf or flower? Or was the bud nothing but a leaf in the beginning? Certain it is, when the leaf comes, the bud disappears. It is not the living but the dead who are dead, as it is only the good who are good. What is transformation? A figment of the brain—nothing more. What we consider real is only apparent. Transformation is simply what we think, imagine. Is a sane man transformed into an insane man? While the man was sane, he was not insane, and when he is insane, he is not sane. To be sane and to be insane are two different states for two very different beings. What two beings ever could be more different than a man in his sane and a man in his insane moments? Whether the sane and the insane man were the same person or not, makes no difference. The case is precisely the same as if they were not the same man.

What is death? Look at the tree and see how that dies—part at a time, a branch here, the leaves there, and finally the trunk and the roots decay. So man dies. An organ may be wholly or partially destroyed, and still life in the being may continue. Death is decay, and decay is death—nothing more.

Is the Roman Empire dead? No, it is merely replaced. Europe is filled with Roman empires in miniature at the present moment—all governed by Roman laws, and Roman justice, and all following those Roman methods of government which were adopted and applied by Roman rulers two thousand years ago. The Roman religion also prevails, in a form more or less modified, with Roman temples, Roman dress, Roman art and architecture to be seen on all sides. How can we say that Rome is dead? No, it has only assumed a new form and it continues to exist under new conditions; it lives and thrives and has its influence over the civilized world as it had in the days of yore. Rome is not dead—nothing really dies that continues to have an influence. Nay, Greece is not dead; neither is Egypt dead, nor Asia

Minor, with its scattered mounds and ruined cities. They all live and have their accustomed influence upon our every day life. Rome gave us laws to rule us, while men had only gods before. Since Rome came and conquered, it is law, not God, or gods, that rule the world. Men worship the laws now as men worshiped gods formerly. Indeed, there are no gods at present.

What was the Reformation? We can never know what the Reformation was; and in fact it is a matter of no concern to us to know what the Reformation was, or what anything else was. The question for us to consider, is rather what the Reformation *is*? The Reformation has never ended. Nothing ever dies, or if it does, it dies when it is born. For during every moment of its existence it changes, and whatever changes dies. But we have the Reformation with us still—or rather we have the result of the Reformation still. We can never separate things from their results. Results are really new forms of old things. The tree of to-day is the result of the shrub of fifty years ago; the man is the result of growth in the boy of the past. Is the boy dead? He certainly has disappeared—the boy as a boy is no more. But just as the boy is the man and the man is the boy, so is the Reformation of the sixteenth century the same as the Reformation of the nineteenth or twentieth.

Does anybody die? Does anything die? Is there any limit, any bounds, any beginning or end of any being, or of any created thing? When did the Reformation begin; when did it end? Did it ever end? Does anything end? The Reformation certainly did not begin with Luther, nor did it end with Luther; neither did Christianity begin with Christ nor end with Christ. Luther was only one factor, perhaps an important factor, in the movement. So it was with Christ. Paul no doubt did more to advance Christianity, more to shape its course and give it a start in the world than Christ himself did.

The Reformation was a national movement, a race movement, a movement of the age. Luther was only an instrument; he was one instrument, as Christ and Peter and Paul and the Popes have been other instruments. The Reformation was not solely, nor even principally, religious in character. It was political rather than religious. It was a rebellion, a bold dash for freedom on the part of the German race. The Pope had become an autocrat; he not only represented God, he was God, so far as the affairs of this world are concerned. He was infallible, as gods always are. This is the idea that the Germans rose to combat, and it is the same idea, the same claim, the same dogma, that mankind are combatting at this day. The Germans con-



tended not alone for liberty of action, but for liberty of thought and the right of free inquiry and their own belief.

Of course the reformers builded larger than they intended—that often happens. They thought only to correct a few evils in the church. They did not perceive for a moment that they would destroy the church or seriously endanger the church. They were going to reform and improve the church, forgetting, or not appreciating the fact, that reformation and improvement always result in the destruction of the old. We repeat, every change results in the destruction of the old and the birth of the new. Without change there would be no birth, and with birth there is always a change. The old and the new are in some mysterious way connected and continuous, but still they are vastly different. The one is dead while the other is living.

So little did Luther contemplate what he was doing, or was about to do, he was actually astounded at the results produced by the Reformation in his day. He found, to his surprise, that he made things worse instead of better than they were. He said himself, complainingly, “the world is becoming worse.” That is the result of revolution always. As we have already intimated, revolution, like reformation, destroys the old.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE INSTABILITY OF VALUES.

As we have more than once intimated, our ideas and conceptions of things are wholly the product of our brain, or rather they are the reflections of our natures. If we ourselves were different in temperament and constitution, we should have different ideas and conceptions from those which we now possess. Our thoughts and notions make us what we are ; or, more accurately, what we are gives character to our thoughts and conceptions.

What we have just been observing applies particularly in the case of the value of things. We speak of value as if it were something definable or ascertainable. But such a case of value does not exist, and it never has existed. Value is like character, a very changeable and indefinite thing. Character never remains a stable or unvarying quantity for a single moment, and



so it is with value. Both value and character are things for us exclusively, and never for other people. They are merely what we think, and they are never, for us, what some one else thinks. Things for us are worth merely what we think they are worth, and that depends upon how much we want them and what we are willing to give for them. If we have no use or desire for them, they have no interest for us, and therefore they are valueless. It will be noticed that the value of things depends not upon something intrinsic or peculiar to the things themselves, but upon our own circumstances, our tastes, our wants—*wholly upon us*. If a thing had any value of its own, a pound of silver to-day would be worth as much as a pound of silver ten years ago, and the same in South Africa as in South America. But such is not the case. The values of things depend not upon what they are, but upon what people think, upon what they will give for them, or upon supply and demand. What is valuable to-day will be worthless perhaps a year hence, under a different state of circumstances. So, really, if we come down to the truth of the matter, one thing has as much value as another, which is no value at all. A penny of a certain date may be worth fifty dollars, if some fool can be found who will give that sum. So a chip from the coffin of some celebrated person may be worth more than a whole cord of ordinary wood.

It is time that people came to have sensible ideas of the value of things, and hence to speak more intelligently on that subject in future. The value of things depends entirely upon what any one will give for them; and before anything can be sold, a purchaser must be found. The state of his mind, his feelings, his wishes, settles the whole business in all cases. When we ask what a thing is worth, we mean what will some one give for it. The question is often asked, how much is such a man worth, that is, what price do you put upon the property he owns? But that is always a very unsafe question to answer. What a man is worth, is what his property will sell for on short notice. And who shall undertake to say what that is in advance? Yet, many estimate the worth of their estates by what they paid for the property originally, which is not a fair standard at all. If you can change people's thoughts you can change values—and in no other way.

If the time ever comes when people can get just and proper notions of value, their footing will be more stable and things with them will go on better all around.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### MOTIVES AND PURPOSES.

We hear so much said about the aims and ends of nature, about the plans and purposes of God—what God thinks, what he says, what he promises and what he aims to do! Also about man's mission, and about his particular purpose in life! What rank nonsense, and how gratuitous are all such statements and assumptions as these! And how do we know that nature has any aims, that nature thinks, wishes or designs? How do we know that God has any plans, or wishes or purposes? How do we know that there is a God to begin with? If God is really God, as we assume he is, he need not have any designs, plans, wishes or purposes. It is men only that bother with these things. God need not think; he need not wish. It is men and animals that must think and hope and plan. Imperfect, finite beings think, wish, plan, labor. But God, if he is God, never thinks or labors. The story that God labored at one time for six successive days, is a myth, a pure fabrication, too impossible for any sensible being to believe for a moment. Animals and men have schemes and plans, and they employ thought and reflection, because they are weak and imperfect. But God has no need to plan; certainly he does not need to labor. He does not even need to wish. Gods are like kings; instead of wishing, they command, and all things come to them. That is one of the advantages of omnipotence, it is one of its prerogatives.

Motive and reason are one and the same thing. Most of what we call motive is the result of reasoning and calculation. But really very little that is done by men is the result of reason or is done with any special object in view. What moves men usually is desire, appetite, impulse. There is generally little reason in connection with human action, and hence there is

very little of what might be called true motive in any case. Motive is merely a form of cause. But as there is no real cause in the affairs of this world, so there is no real motive for human action. God does not plan, reflect, reason, and so he has no motive. One who is infinite in wisdom and power never has any need to reflect, and he can have no designs. He has no occasion to choose. He decides, resolves, without reflection. A man reflects, considers, decides simply because to him the future is unknown and uncertain. With God who is omniscient and omnipotent the case is different. To him everything is known and everything is possible. He never hesitates, because he is never in doubt. He simply does what he resolves to do.

Motive implies a plan, a scheme. Those alone have motives who reason, consider, reflect. Animals have no true motives. They think, but they do not reason. They have desire; it is their desires, their wants, their appetites, that impel them to the course which they finally decide to pursue. Men have schemes, plans, motives, but usually they act from desire, and motive, with results in view, is entirely lost sight of. If a man eats, he has no motive—he is simply hungry. So if he fears, or flies, he does so from impulse and not from motive. If a man walks, there is no more motive than when he breathes. And so when he sings or talks. He is merely moved to act as he does, but he does not reflect, and hence it is not properly a matter of motive. So in playing the violin there is no motive. Often a man kills another wholly from impulse, and motive is entirely absent. A man loves or hates without motive. In not one case out of one thousand is there motive for human action.

## CHAPTER XV.

### PREVENTION AND IMPROVEMENT.

If we wish to have any influence in human affairs, and especially in guiding men and shaping their characters, we must begin with them early in life. It is the twig that may be bent, not the full grown tree; it is the child that can be changed in character and direction, not the mature man. To prevent disease is comparatively easy; but to cure disease without allowing it to run its course, after it has once become fully established in the system, is next thing to an impossibility. This is particularly true in the case of government. The acquiring of power by designing and unscrupulous men is a slow process; the loss of liberty by the people is always gradual and the operation is almost imperceptible. The people are not quick to perceive things before they come to pass; they are extremely slow in detecting the designs of those who make it a business to undermine free institutions. As we have already intimated, people are too confiding, too apathetic, and too heedless altogether. They might easily check ambitious men in their career of usurpation, if they would only start in time but, as a matter of fact, they wait till crystallization sets in and then it is quite too late. After the enemy is actually installed in the citadel, it is usually too late to resist. In other words, it is the wrong time to begin. The time to make the main resistance is before the enemy breaks through the outer lines. What the people as a body want at all times, and what individuals also need in their affairs, is judgment and eternal vigilance. But as bodies of men never have a head, they have no mind, they have no one to look after them or care for them. So, why should they not fall an easy prey to demagogues and artful men? They uniformly do so in the end—it is simply a question of time as to the fate of any mere body of men. It is only for a comparatively short time that such a head-



less, mindless body of men as "the people" can retain their liberties.

No, it cannot be too well borne in mind, that very much depends upon how a man starts in early life. When he has gone on in a certain direction for some time, it is very hard for him to turn back and take a new direction, even when he knows and confesses that he is wrong. A little mountain stream can easily be turned into a new channel, but a great river overcomes all obstacles and it must be allowed to pursue its course unchecked to the last.

How shall we have improvement in this world, especially in the human heart? How shall we change things? How shall we improve men? We can hardly change or improve either men or things—it is next thing to impossible. We can divert men into new paths, we can interest them in new subjects, but we cannot change a man's nature, his spots—not at least without regeneration and really putting a new man in his place.

It is clear enough that education does not reform or renew men; indeed, it has very little effect upon character, except when the efforts are properly directed and persisted in while the learner is young. Religion did have for a time an influence upon character, but that was when men were as children, when they relied entirely upon the priests for knowledge and direction, and when they did not pretend to do any thinking on their own account. But now the case is different and every one is able to do his own thinking, without any assistance from other sources. No, religion is having hardly any appreciable influence upon human conduct at the present moment.

It cannot be that we must look to civilization as a source of reforming power, for civilization is greatly in need of reform in its own household. It cannot be the press to which we must look for assistance in this emergency. Reformation of this character does not come within the domain of the press, whose chief mission, it is assumed, is to disseminate information and coin money.

We wish we knew some means or method by which the hearts of men could be moved. There was a time when eloquence had some power, but now even eloquence, as an instrument with which to move and impress men, has fallen into disuse. People in this age will read, if the subject interests them, but they will not listen. Even in Congress, the best speeches are uniformly delivered to empty seats. They are delivered to be printed, not to be listened to, except in very rare instances. When people listen nowadays they want to be amused, not instructed.

If we could only arouse men ! But how shall it be done ? Teaching will not do, lectures will not do, books will not do, prayers will not do. Even an alarm of fire in the night time would not stir most men. They would wake up just long enough to ascertain that their property was not in danger, and then they would sink back and soon be in a sound slumber again. We see thousands and thousands daily traveling the road that leads to certain death and destruction, and we would like to do something to save them. But our advice and admonitions would usually be of no avail—no one would give heed to them. In this pleasure-loving and commercial age of ours, people will only read what interests them—a continued story, for instance, or the record of some scandal or crime. So, all we have to do is to sit still and see the procession pass by.

It is curious to observe in this connection how careless and indifferent people are ! Careless in what they say, careless as to what they do, and utterly indifferent as to consequences in most cases. Everything goes mainly at random. Nothing is scanned or scrutinized closely, and nothing is ever reported with anything like accuracy and fairness. An approximation to truth is the most that can be expected in any case. People do not worry about truth ; they do not even know what it is when they come across it.

But would it not be well for people to be a little more precise and considerate, especially in cases where there is much at stake ? Carelessness, listlessness, indolence and indifference are the besetting sins of the present age. It is one of the most striking features of civilized life. We are reminded of a lot of opium eaters, or of so many somnambulists wandering about aimlessly in their sleep. No one can predict when they will awake nor decide just what they may do before they awake. The whole business is a most distressing uncertainty.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### NEW VIEWS OF EDUCATION.

Nothing deserves so much attention and such mature consideration as the subject of education. It is far better to have a little education that is true than to have a great accumulation of theories and notions that must be unlearned to prevent their becoming a burden in after life. What is our education for? Is it to enable people to do their work better and to lead a better life? No, that is not the chief object of education according to the prevailing theory at the present time. The object is to make good children in the family, good members in the church and good citizens in the state. That is the chief aim and object of education according to the theory on which it is now based. Education is strictly a family matter, a church and state matter, and since it is for the benefit of these organizations mainly, it is maintained at public expense. Pupils are taught what is contained in the books, not what is known to be truth. Everything goes by authority, in schools.

But education really ought to be an individual matter. It ought to be for the advancement and the future welfare of the learner, rather than for either the family, the church or the state. Pupils should not have too much education to begin with. It should be merely a platform on which pupils may stand until they are strong enough to help themselves. As matters exist in the department of education at the present time, we go too far in some directions and not far enough in other directions. We do not possess clear and well-defined notions as yet as to what can and what cannot be accomplished through the medium of education. In too many cases, teachers do not comprehend clearly the true character of education in the first place. Many have an impression that education can transform a person with one character into a person with a character that is entirely different. But this is an absolute impossibility. Education cannot

even confer talents upon people who do not possess ability. Education is an active, not a passive process; no person can learn without making some effort. It is impossible to teach a tree or an inanimate being, for the reason that neither is capable of making any effort.

What is education, then, what does it do? It renders assistance; it helps those that help themselves, and it helps no others. Education, so far as the learner is concerned, is purely a matter of growth. The learner grows in knowledge just as the plant grows, from the soil where it is placed, through the influences by which it is affected. Knowledge cannot be transferred; it never has been transferred from one to another at any time or in any manner. The germs of all knowledge are within—never without. Every man knows to-day as much as he ever will know, only the time may come when he will better understand and comprehend what he knows. People who know nothing never can learn, and therefore it is vain to attempt to teach such creatures to any extent. All progress in knowledge is mere development. We never can know what other people know; we never can think what they think nor understand what they understand. The very best we can do towards advancing in that direction is to get well in hand what we do know, what we always have known.

The main effort of the teacher should not be to instill into the mind of the pupil an indefinite number of doctrines and dogmas, which may be or may not be true, but to start him on the path that leads to knowledge and urge him to proceed steadily and carefully in his inquiry after truth. We should not teach the pupil for a moment what we consider to be truth, but let him ascertain for himself what is truth. In other words, the main effort of educators should be to induce the pupil to ascertain for himself what is truth, and finally to express his thoughts in clear and intelligible language. *This is the beginning and the end of learning.* This is the gaining of wisdom.

According to the plans and systems that prevail to-day, pupils are spending far too much time in getting what is called an education, and they are taught too many things that can be of no use to them in after life. In fact, most of what the pupil learns in school has to be discarded as he grows older and makes progress in real knowledge. What is wanted in this life is useful and practical knowledge, instead of theoretical and speculative knowledge. There are too many fads in our schools. Moreover, the pupil takes up his studies altogether too early in life, and he continues in them for too many years. The best way to learn how to do things is to go where they are done.



Practical education is far more serviceable than theories of any kind.

And then how silly it is to talk about finishing an education ! As if an education ever could be finished ! Boys and girls go to school a while at one institution and a while at another which is higher. About the age of twenty or twenty-one, they finish their education ! But that is really when their education ought to begin. If a man lived to be two hundred years old—a sensible man, we mean—he would then just begin to appreciate how little there was that he could be said to know. He would realize then, much more than ever before, how very little knowledge it is that any man can be said to have acquired. If people would study more than they do and spend less time in accumulating property that they cannot use, they would be happier and wiser than they are.

We are too anxious to do something for others, to help them, to teach them, to direct them—and while we are doing that, we very often neglect our own salvation. It is very little indeed that we can do for others in the way of intellectual and moral advancement. Learning, we repeat, is not a passive but an active process ; people really cannot be taught, but they can learn, with the help of others, if they will only make the required effort. People never become good through what others do for them. Regeneration must always come from within. And yet people are perpetually trying to do something for others by way of education. They imagine that they have just the medicine, the panacea, that will cure everybody, if people will only take the remedy they prescribe. This world is full of goody-goody people who are anxious to be doing something nice for other folks, and especially for the children of other people. It used to be Christianity through which people were to be saved—if they only could be converted. Now Christianity is sadly neglected, and education comes to the front. Education is expected to save everybody, if they will only take enough of it. People have the same confidence in education that they have in patent medicines. You are sure to be cured if you swallow enough bottles.

Education is expected to make everybody honest, noble, lovable and good, but somehow or other it does not succeed in doing anything of the kind. We have more education now than we have ever had before—and with it more crime, rascality and misery. We do not know that there is any connection between education and these results. We merely state the facts, and people may connect and compare to suit their individual tastes. But to tell the truth, we do not have the same high opinion of education, latter-day education, that some people have. We do



not believe it makes people happy. We do not believe even that it makes men good. We doubt indeed that education of itself even makes gentlemen. It certainly does not make people wise.

There are so many things that we do not know that we might know and ought to know—and so many things which we do know that ought never to have engaged our attention! People may know the gossip of the day, or what is in the newspapers, or in the latest novel, but how little do they know of the things around them, the things in which they ought to be the most interested, even the most ordinary matters! They have not learned to observe, they do not think, they do not care. How many there are who could not distinguish an oil painting from an ordinary chromo! How many do not know one tune from another and cannot say whether it is Hail Columbia or Yankee Doodle when they hear it! How many cannot distinguish brass from gold, silverware from plated ware, or good goods from shoddy! Nine people out of ten see as much beauty in a cheap imitation as in a two hundred dollar diamond. They know nothing about the beauties of music—it pleases them, but they know not why. They see nothing to interest them in flowers, and they have no appreciation of nature generally. They see nothing to interest them in rocks, because they know nothing of the origin and structure of rocks. In architecture they observe no faults and they admire no beauties, for they know nothing about architecture to begin with. This prevailing defect of mankind is not constitutional, it arises chiefly from the want of a properly directed education.

We are not speaking of ignorant people necessarily. No, what we have said applies as well to those who consider themselves intelligent as to those who know that they are not wise. They simply lack proper training and guidance. They may be educated, but it is in a superficial and imperfect manner. They know too much of things that do not concern them, and too little of things that do. It is not really their fault, but the fault of the times and of the people at large. Our fashions are wrong, and hence our customs are wrong. People do not open their eyes, and therefore they fail to see what they might see, if they would only make a little effort; and some of them fail to see even when they open their eyes, simply because they are lacking in interest and attention. They have never cultivated as they should habits of thought and observation. People go even to Norway or Siberia and yet see nothing. There are ten thousand things, beautiful and interesting things, which are before their very eyes, and yet they fail to perceive them. Ignorance may be bliss, but if so, it is only the bliss that comes from blindness or darkness.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE MARRIAGE QUESTION.

Marriage as we have it now, and as it has prevailed in both civilized and uncivilized lands for some thousands of years, is based upon a theory that is not now advocated by any fair-minded and intelligent person, namely, *the slavery of woman*. This theory has become antiquated and obsolete, but still we cling to the doctrine, as we do to all things that we have long been accustomed to regard as sacred in character. The church inculcates the belief in the holiness of marriage, and with us, even yet, the teachings of the church command the highest regard. Why should men not believe in the divine nature of marriage, as well as in the propriety of holding human beings in slavery, especially those of the female sex? The Bible endorses the institution of marriage and that of slavery at the same time.

Marriage, it will be observed, is not only an institution of religion, but it is also an affair of the state. Why this should be so, it is not so easy to ascertain, but that it is so, is a fact beyond any question. If it were not for the state, we should have no marriage properly so called, and no such institution as the family. The family is the very foundation of the state, and that is the reason why the state takes the subject of matrimony so seriously. Without the institution of marriage, with its forms and ceremonies, and all its necessary concomitants, we should have parents and children, no doubt, but not as we have parents and children now. Parents would have no power, no authority, and the children would have no duties. A family is an institution very much like the state itself; it is fully organized and has a head and members, with rights and privileges of its own. Without the family as recognized and established by the state, there would be no legitimate children and no right of inheritance—and without such an institution as inheritance, the acquiring of

wealth would not be possible. If there were no families to inherit the property that has been accumulated, there would be no inducement for accumulation in the first place. It is easy enough to see what marriage is, and why it holds such a commanding position as it does. As a matter of justice and principle, the state has really nothing to do with any domestic arrangements that a couple may agree upon, as it is beyond doubt wholly an affair of their own. But the state is not so much concerned about principle in any case as it is about policy. All our laws on the subject of marriage come under the head of state policy. The same is true of education. With this matter the state never should meddle, but it does—because policy requires usurpation, or innovation, in this case as it does in others.

That there is something radically wrong in our views of propriety and impropriety in connection with the marriage question, is rendered evident by the fact that the views on that subject change as climates and countries change. The Greeks had one code on social matters, and the Romans had a code that was entirely different. Again, the code that prevailed all over the East, in Asia and North Africa, differed very much from the codes of both Greece and Rome. Even in the various countries of Europe to-day, the social and domestic customs vary in many essential respects. In the north the code is more strict; in the south it is more lax. In Roumania and Servia there is a freedom between the sexes that would not be tolerated even in France and Italy, and these countries, again, are not so strict in their notions of propriety as the people are in England and Germany. It must never be forgotten that what is proper and what is improper is wholly a matter of opinion in any case. Surely the people of Roumania and Servia are as much entitled to their opinion on this subject as the people of northern Europe are to theirs. It is not the prerogative of any man, or of any people, to set themselves up as the standard and denounce those who happen to differ from them as being unquestionably in the wrong. In deciding any question, the wisest man in the world can boast of nothing higher or more reliable than his opinion.

Nothing can be established on a more unstable or more unsatisfactory foundation than marriage based upon love. It is absolutely the only business transaction where reason and common sense are not supposed to be brought into requisition. People are supposed to marry those whom they fancy, even though their judgment would inform them that the match would prove to be disastrous.

The relations between man and wife, according to law and theory at least, are solely those existing between master and

slave. As the husband owns the woman whom he marries, he is of course entitled to her love, and if she shows the least symptom of having a little affection for some one else, the husband resents this piece of infidelity, as he terms it, and there is a disturbance in the family at once. Could anything be more ridiculous, more absurd, more unjust and more unnatural than this? As if love could be made subject to command! And as if loving one person exhausted the fountain, and left no love for anybody else! There is no being so inhuman, so tyrannical and so absurdly mean as the husband who has inherited all the prevailing notions as to what a married woman owes to her lord and master. The Orientals furnish the lowest and most vulgar type of the husband; but every country throughout the civilized world has plenty of Blue Beards of its own.

The wife must love her husband and him only, whether she does so or not—poor thing—but the husband himself is accorded many privileges. He stands on an eminence, and the law of conjugal fidelity does not apply to him. He can lead as many double lives as he pleases, if he is discreet in his movements and has the money with which to pay for his diversion. Is it to be wondered that, under such conditions, marriage, in very many cases, is a living lie? The husband cheats his wife and the wife follows the example that is set for her. Each is flattered with the belief that it is the other alone that is being cheated and deceived! No law or code will be followed that people do not accept as sensible and well founded; and when they do not believe in a marriage code in many particulars, they will not follow it. We mean to say a great many will not, no matter how loudly they may protest nor what they may pretend.

It will be remembered that God had a similar experience with his Children of Israel. He commanded them to love him and him only. He assured them he was a jealous God, and they must have no other God before them. He would not tolerate even so much as a photograph. But they simply could not meet the requirements of the case, or at least they did not. The Israelites were continually running after strange gods, as men run after strange women at the present day, just for the novelty of the change. Human nature has been the same from the beginning. It is not natural to love or admire one person only under any conditions. How absurd to expect that we should admire only one picture or only one piece of art.

What a remarkable thing it is that women, knowing the facts as they do, still love slavery, or what is the same thing, matrimony. It delights them to hear their chains jingle, because the chains are gilded! They want a home—and to get



that, they will consent to be some man's abject slave forever. They want to love somebody, and they want somebody to love them—poor deluded creatures as they are! They have been educated from childhood in that way. They want finery and a handsome cage to pine in, and then they are willing to lead a captive life all the rest of their days. In too many instances the married woman is hardly more than some man's housekeeper. In other cases she is only his mistress. It seems all the more strange, when we consider how bright and sensible woman is in other departments, and see her lose her head completely when it comes to the subject of matrimony! When that is the question to be considered, it is a rare thing to see a woman act in a rational manner. She will surrender her name, give up all her possessions, and lose her identity absolutely, just to marry, in many cases, a fellow that does not deserve even the title of man! She will do all this for love! And what is love? A wild dream, which, temporarily at least, leaves the patient in a state of delirium. Love is a mysterious affair—a sort of divine afflatus—a sacrifice, kept in vogue by the church, by the state, by poets, by parents, and novel writers, in accordance with policy and custom.

Have we not had enough of marriage under such conditions? Are we not having enough even to-day? Boys and girls get married, and shortly after this more boys and girls come for the public to care for. Divorces are common, as one might expect. Marriage is a religious or sacred affair—supposed to be different essentially from everything else on earth—but it is not. There is nothing in getting married that elevates a man in the slightest degree—rather the contrary. Marriage is usually either a business arrangement, for profit or convenience, or it is the mating of two individuals as we find them among the lower animals. There is nothing very peculiar, nor very mysterious, nor very unnatural in the whole marriage proceeding. The priests have endeavored to mystify these matters, but their efforts have proved a failure for all except the ignorant and infatuated. People get married just as they sit down to eat an ordinary meal, simply because their desires lead them in that direction, or because they wish to follow a custom. That matches are made in Heaven, or that God stoops to meddle with the love affairs of silly young people, is a proposition that is too preposterous to dwell upon seriously for one moment.

But people will ask, and no doubt they do ask, what shall we do without marriage? How could the world be replenished if the marriage institution ceased to exist? That is a very natural question for people to ask, and the less they are inclined to think



and inquire on their own account, the more natural the question will prove to be. The same class of people are not able to see how the world could exist without crime, misery and distress, without wrongs and offences of all kinds, without law, without government, without taxes, without oppression, without punishments. For a large class of mankind it is impossible to conceive how the world could ever change in any essential respect. They imagine that as things are to-day they must forever remain. People reach such foolish and unfounded conclusions as these simply because they fail to observe and reflect. It is a well known fact that no institution, no being, no body of people, endures for all time. Everything perishes at last. It is perfectly certain that as things are now they will not be a few centuries hence.

As a matter of fact only a small portion of mankind adopt such a marriage institution as prevails in this country. A large portion of the race, civilized and uncivilized, have marriage systems of their own, and sometimes they manage to get along without any marriage system at all. So it is evident that our particular system is not indispensable. What should take its place?

That is a question that we do not pretend to answer. Perhaps no material change would be desirable at the present time. People must live a while longer and learn certain important lessons before a radical change is desirable. It is quite a step in advance to be willing to admit that our present marriage system is not satisfactory in its results. There are very many who believe, as the author does sincerely, that our marriage institution is not established upon a sound and rational basis. It bears the marks of age, and its evident infirmities are numerous. There ought to be something, and no doubt there will be something some day, to take its place. It is not, or it ought not to be, a state institution in the first place. People ought to be free to marry or not to marry, as they are free to make any business arrangement or enter into any ordinary copartnership without the help or the interference of either the state or the church. Some rules or customs in the community having the force of law would have to be established in reference to children. Those who have children should be called upon to care for them and protect them until they are old enough to be quite able to care for themselves. There are plenty of children now, under the present state system, that are thrown upon the community, but such a state of things should not continue to exist. Laws evidently do not afford a remedy in such cases. What is required

to regulate such matters is a strong and healthy sentiment in the community.

It should be borne in mind that our marriage system, like our religious system and our governmental system, is only one out of many. It is only for the time being, and eventually it will disappear. When woman achieves her independence, as she undoubtedly will some day, she will not tolerate for a moment any husband and master. She will want to retain her name and have her own property, and when it comes to the matter of service, she will not consent to be the slave of any human being.

What do our numberless divorces really mean? They mean a great deal; they mean that there is a radical change in public sentiment on this subject; they mean that the people at large do not regard marriage as a sacred, binding, lasting obligation. But why stop where we are? Why bother with the courts, and why go to all that expense and endure all that delay? If divorce is a good and proper thing for one party, why not for all? Even as it is, it is a matter wholly determined by and between the parties themselves. They agree that they desire a divorce, and all that the state or the court does in the premises is to give its sanction. But again we ask, why so much expense and delay? Why not buy permissions for divorce as we buy tickets to the show? Or rather, why should we be compelled to buy permissions at all? It would be just as well for the parties to agree upon the step and divorce themselves. That is the way they do in Egypt, and in other countries of the East. Where people get married easily, they necessarily become unmarried easily. It has always been so, and it always will be so.

People begin to understand that marriage binds too much in some directions and too little in others. It binds the poor, but it does not bind the rich; the rich can do as they please, and they can get married and unmarried as they like. They marry to get divorced, and get divorced to marry. Again, the restrictions upon the unmarried are too unreasonable and too severe. The married can do very much as they please, simply because they are married. They can flirt and court and bathe, and have all sorts of amusements—but the unmarried must be more circumspect. However, when a thing is wrong, it will be rectified in due time, and so there will be a rectification in our marriage relations some time or other. We do not know just how the matter will be finally regulated, but that public opinion will adjust the business satisfactorily in the end, we regard as a matter of certainty.

We might add that marriage as we have it is not a Christian institution; it is a Roman institution, and our laws on the sub-

ject are Roman in principle. The New Testament does not favor marriage; Christ never married and he had no regard even for his own family; and as to Paul, it is well known that he had anything but a high regard for woman. The old Roman theory was that when a woman married she quitted her own family and the gods of her family forever, and henceforth she adored the gods of her husband and his family. And this is our theory to-day. When a woman marries, she turns her back upon her own family, because she cannot belong to two families at one and the same time. She surrenders everything.

It may not be amiss to explain, in this connection, that the difference between polygamy and monogamy as systems is rather apparent than real. In the East, if a man is rich, he has several wives, while in Christian countries, if a man is wealthy, it is quite common for him to have several concubines. It is not law that settles such matters, either in the East or West. Even in the East, in Turkey for instance, husbands usually have but one wife, simply because it is found to be expensive and otherwise disadvantageous to have a larger number.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE INSUFFICIENCY OF EVIDENCE.

We should first of all endeavor to get a clear idea of what constitutes proof. As a matter of fact there is no real proof, though there are several forms of evidence that pass for proof. What is called evidence is what affects some people one way and others differently. There is nothing that serves as actual proof ; there is nothing that could properly be called demonstration. Proof in mathematics, in physics and metaphysics is wholly a delusion. It must be a delusion, for if it were real proof, it would be proof for everybody and conviction would be a necessary result. So we have proof in criminal trials, as if crimes, or wrong doing of which none but the culprit himself could be a witness, could ever be proven ! Even if he confessed his guilt, it would not be proved. Suffice it to say at best only a few people believe a few things. Proof has but little effect upon most people. Whether they believe or not, is a matter of indifference to them. How many different sects take their rise from one and the same source, from the Bible for instance ! From the fact that there is no proof, arises the other fact that no two men fully agree in their opinions and convictions.

If we could get this proof delusion removed from our minds, what a blessed relief it would prove to be for mankind ! It is a burden that embarrasses us at every step and continually retards our progress. There is no such a thing even as a semblance of proof. Prove people guilty ! How ? It has never yet been done. All proof is inference, opinion, conclusion, belief—nothing more. Indeed, all seeing is inference and it is the result of reflection. We hear about mathematical proof, logical proof, documentary proof, witness proof, and proofs of other kinds. What are they, and what do they amount to ? For people who wish to be convinced, anything is proof ; for those who will not be convinced,



nothing is proof. That is the history of the world throughout all ages. Proof at best is a mere statement of facts, with an appeal to the reason of men. The effect of this is different upon different people. Proof is like medicine. While it cures some people, it makes no perceptible impression upon others—and what its real effect will be in any case, nobody can determine in advance.

What a wonderful power men would have if there were such a thing as proof! All they would have to do would be to bring forward their evidence, and people would be hypnotized at once, and so remain forever. It would be of very great benefit to the author of this work most assuredly. As it is, he brings forward the most indubitable proof, as it seems to him, and yet very few appear to be seriously affected thereby—only an occasional one here and there. Whereas, if he had that elixir of proof so much extolled by some, he might make an indefinite number of converts without the least delay.

Proof at best is merely what is probable—the word itself shows that. It is only a form of the Latin *probo*; and evidence is only what seems or appears to be. Things may be as they seem, or they may not. All proof is inference, and inference can never be relied on.

One kind of proof is very common, the proof that depends upon authority. A great many believe what Plato or Aristotle said, merely because these ancients said it; and so people believe what they find in the Bible, merely because it is in the Bible. They take things on trust, or on credit, but it is a very unsafe course to follow. Authority-proof is no better than any other proof; in fact *it is no proof at all*. What people say in any case is no more proof than what they dream. Why should we believe Plato or Aristotle, or Herbert Spencer or Tolstoi? They were or are ordinary men with opinions, and we are ordinary men with opinions also. Where is the difference? How does one come to be better authority than the other?

The whole office of proof is to demonstrate that things are true. But truth, as we have found it, is a very variable and intangible essence. When we have it, we are never certain that we have it. In fact, we never attain truth. The very farthest that we can reach in this direction is to an approximation of truth, to probability. Things that are really true are only partially true, approximately true.

Proof starts with assumption, with error in the first place. We stumble around in the dark trying to find the true way—but we never discover it. There are no rules or laws without plenty of exceptions. So it is with all truths—they are only

*qualifiedly true.* How could any fact continue to be a fact when all things, as we know, are constantly changing? *Nothing ever happens twice alike.*

To illustrate what truth is and what proof amounts to, we might give a few examples: Nothing is good, or handsome, or valuable of itself. It is only as men consider it. No woman is handsome until she is considered handsome, and no man is famous until he is pronounced famous; just as no man is a true king till he is anointed and crowned king. If the handsomest woman in the world were considered homely, could she still be called handsome? What makes a woman pretty is simply what people say about her. It all depends upon how her features and manner impress people. If they say she is not pretty, she is a rejected candidate, and she loses the prize. Nothing is worth ten dollars except that which is current at that rating. No man is good except him who is considered good. All we mean by a man's being good is that he bears that reputation among men. If he were reputed to be bad, would he be pronounced good? No matter how good a man is, he is a bad man, if people consider him so. So much for truth. No matter what may be a man's reputation, his character and conduct must be such as to give him the reputation that he bears. Surely all men are not considered bad. The difference between the reputation of men who are considered bad and those who are considered good is an evidence that there is a real difference between the men, but that difference is undefinable.

Indeed, what good does it do any man to do anything or possess any merit, unless he happens to be accepted, canonized as it were, by the people? It is not the achievements of men that make their reputation. That is solely the work of history and tradition. We come back to our old position: Nothing is good except what is considered good, and so with all qualities. *Qualities of objects lie wholly in the thoughts of men.*

What men say is no proof, because men do not always say what they mean, nor do they mean what they say. Words have different meanings, and it often happens that the speaker uses them in one application and the hearer accepts them in another sense. The meaning of words is extremely elastic, and from that fact it happens that no two men get exactly the same sense from the same words. Perhaps two men never do.

How many ways of proving things have there been! Sometimes there is proof by combat, sometimes by ordeal, sometimes by torture. These systems are generally discarded now, but for hundreds of years in Europe they prevailed as the sure mode of securing truth; and in some countries these principles are not

discarded yet. Even many of us believe that a man may be so tortured that he will be forced to confess the truth. This kind of proof is supposed to be wholly God's work. But in all cases where an opinion is arrived at and a decision rendered, it is wholly a matter of inference. If such and such things had happened then certain other things must have followed as a matter of necessity. That is the doctrine.

So to-day we hear what this one states and that one states ; we consult this or that record, and make this or that inquiry. Then we compare notes and draw our conclusion ! But what has been demonstrated ? It must not be forgotten that all proof lies in the conclusions which are drawn from premises. Some men will draw one conclusion and others will draw another from the same evidence. How very uncertain a thing is proof always ! Mathematics affords no better proof than that obtained from other sources. Everything there is mere inference. It all depends in the first place upon a supposition, upon things taken for granted, upon things which could not be proven in any manner. All depends on an "if." If this is so, that must be so. How do we know that it must be so ? Facts that are facts are independent of each other, and there is no place for an "if." Things that are true, confessedly true, need no proof. So, if a man is guilty of a crime, and we know he is guilty, how do we strengthen the case by proving him guilty ? Proof at all times is a mere meaningless ceremony. It is simply a matter of form. What has proof to do with the question any way ? If A has stolen a horse, and we know he has, we have no need to have any one prove the fact to us ; and for him who does not know that he has committed the act, no proof would avail. Hearsay is never evidence—never reliable evidence. More things are said that are not true than things that are true. Every trial is based on doubt ; if there were no doubt, there would be no need of a trial. How is that doubt removed ? *It never is removed*, except for those who wish to be convinced. Really, a trial never removes doubt ; and the facts remain precisely as they were in the beginning. To appreciate how uncertain the decisions of a court are, notice how often they are reversed—and more would be reversed, if more appeals were taken. What is called the agreement of a jury is generally a pure fiction. They do not agree, they merely compromise or submit. They are influenced by their colleagues or are anxious about their supper or dismissal. Such is proof !

It must not be overlooked that among men people are punished not because they are guilty but because they have been convicted. The trial and the verdict are the true cause of the

prisoner's being punished. Those who are not tried are not punished—they simply escape. Why? Not because they are not guilty by any means. As we have said before, guilt has nothing to do with a man's being punished. Perhaps as many innocent men are punished as those who are guilty. And certainly the innocent are continually the sufferers for the wrongs of the guilty. What is justice? Is wickedness never profitable? Unquestionably as many guilty ones escape as are ever punished.

A court trial, what a farce it is! What evidence, what real evidence, does it afford, what proof of innocence or guilt does it give in any instance? It begins with an assumption—of the guilt of the accused—and ends with an opinion, that formed by the court. That is all. Do witnesses in court never swear to a lie? Do they ever swear to the truth, properly considered?

Let us get rid of inferences of all kinds. What reliance can be placed upon inferences? They may be right, and they may be wrong—there is no certainty either way. So it is far better that we discard inferences altogether. Let us never dream of convicting any one of a crime upon such flimsy evidence as an inference! Circumstantial evidence is conceded to be only an excuse or a substitute for evidence. It is a sham and a piece of folly. Let us cease to amuse ourselves or deceive others with any such dumb show as this.

All the evidence in the world, documentary, oral or otherwise, would not suffice to change a man's opinions. In fact in this case neither quantity nor quality makes much difference. Evidence has some effect, but belief is a matter of growth, and evidence alone will never do the business. A man's belief is based upon something besides evidence. How very many things do we believe without any evidence, and even against evidence. All our religious convictions are a matter of faith, not evidence. Faith is beyond and outside of evidence, and it has no connection with evidence. Faith comes from visions, revelation, inspiration, and has no regard to evidence. Very slight things—even no evidence at all—cause us to believe or disbelieve. So it is in court trials, so in our everyday life. We should not argue with men and try to convince them—it is labor lost as a general thing. Calling a man a fool is not proof. Men will or will not be convinced as they please. Before we can convince people, they must see and understand things as we do, but that is something that rarely happens. The great question is, what enables people to see and understand? Surely what we say does not have that effect. Again we observe, no evidence is proof; it is mere inference, somebody's opinion, and nothing more.

The most notable fact in regard to evidence in court is that



it depends wholly upon observation and memory, and yet it is well known that nothing is more variable and more unreliable than observation, and nothing is more treacherous than memory. Most people do not observe carefully, and others do not remember well. And then to think that men should be convicted of crime on the evidence of those who merely think, remember and believe! Is not the question of proof really a vital question?

Proof, finally, amounts to simply this: "I think the facts of the case are so and so. Now what do you think? I would like to have you think as I think!" Evidence, taken even in its broadest sense, is merely what seems to some people. *It never seems in the same way to all people.* Proof is only our view of the case and our way of presenting it. But do we ourselves see objects clearly, fully, justly?

It should not be forgotten that when we see an object, we only see a part of it and at best only one side of it. That is the reason why pictures are never wholly satisfactory. They only present the object as seen from one point of view. As a matter of fact when we look at an object, we see it as a whole and we overlook many of its special points and features. Again, when we direct our attention to the points and the various parts, we overlook the object as a whole. Indeed, how could we include at one view the whole of a long or a large object? As a matter of fact we do not. When the painter paints a picture, he presents only what strikes his eye, or what commands his attention, and he ignores all the rest. Most of the points are overlooked. Hence it is that no two or a dozen men paint the same object alike, because they all see the object differently. So it is with all our ideas and conceptions. Much is in the eye, and still more in the glass through which we make our observations. Much is in the camera in photography, much in the paper, much in the light and shadow, and much in the position of the one whose picture is being taken. Every picture is ideal rather than natural. Things are not presented as they are; pictures merely present the painter's own idea or conception—nothing more. And at best, it must be remembered, we see only the outside of things—never the inside, never the things themselves.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### TRIALS IN COURT.

An absurd belief seems to prevail that there are no trials but those at court ; that if a man is not arrested and brought before such a court, or if he is arrested and not found guilty, he is unquestionably innocent. But such conclusions do not necessarily follow.

As a matter of fact, trials in court are very rare occurrences, compared with the investigations made and the verdicts rendered by that silent tribunal known as the community. Every man and every woman who remains for any length of time in any town or locality is compelled to undergo one or more investigations of this character. The interested party is not arrested, or brought into court, or even molested in any way. The court under consideration does its work in a very quiet, unostentatious manner, but its decisions are none the less effective after they are rendered. The collecting and sifting of the evidence goes on slowly and imperceptibly, but when it is once fully digested, the proof afforded is far more reliable than that which is obtained in any court of law. No report is made, and the services of no officer are brought into requisition ; no fetters are required, no jail or lock-up is used, and no punishment is inflicted of any kind. But a lasting and reliable verdict is rendered, and it determines the party's standing in the community so long as he remains one of its members. To alter a person's rating at some future time would require new and important evidence and a deliberate rehearing of the case.

How much better every way is such a verdict—how much more sensible and reliable—than a verdict rendered in a court at law, with its Middle Age appliances and its strange paraphernalia ! A trial in court is a one-sided affair, and it is always unjust either to one party or the other. It presents at best only

one view of the case, like the photograph of a person at a single sitting. The community always knows a great deal more about its citizens than it ever gets credit for—more of their history, their habits, their inclinations, their dispositions, their propensities and a hundred other things that enter into the make up of a man, than is commonly supposed. What does the court know of a man who presents himself either as a witness or a party, being seen only for an hour, or perhaps a day? It can know absolutely nothing of his real character, or his merits and demerits, and for that reason every trial at law is a palpable farce, so far as justice or proof is concerned.

The community when it enters upon its deliberations, does its work coolly, and it is quite indifferent as to whether its business is finished in a day or a year. It does not go in search of evidence—it takes it as it comes, and catches it usually on the fly. This thing and that thing are put together, and a conclusion is finally drawn. *Rarely indeed does a community ever make a mistake in its verdict, while it is known that the court often errs.*

As we have already intimated, the condemned party is neither imprisoned nor driven from town—though the latter course was sometimes resorted to in olden times. It is not necessary to expatriate a man, culprit though he is known to be; nor is it necessary to confine him or torture him in any way. But people usually deal with such persons at arms' length, and always look upon them as suspects. In practically all communities, especially the larger towns, there are all sorts of men, good, bad and indifferent, and they all have their proper rating among those with whom they associate. Many people have the idea, absurd as it is, that all wicked, corrupt and even dangerous persons are in prison. That is a serious misapprehension indeed. Not one in a hundred, perhaps not one in a thousand, of these classes are in prison—they have not even been apprehended.

People meet in their walks every day those that they know are not honest or trustworthy citizens, and who perhaps are swindlers, thieves, robbers, dead-beats, deceivers, incendiaries. And in some cases those who are known to be murderers are allowed to be at large. Nothing is said about these things out loud, and nothing appears in the newspapers, because if charges were made they could not be proven, according to the insufficient rules of legal evidence. But those who imagine that there is no such permanent vigilance committee as the community certainly make a mistake. The guilty may escape a long time, but they are pretty certain to be caught at last. People, whether in high or low positions, can keep their crimes, scandals and rascalities out of the newspapers, but they cannot keep them

out of the thoughts and mouths of those whom they meet in the streets every day. The court can even be fooled—in some cases it can be influenced—but the community in which a man or woman lives will always be found an impartial and incorruptible judge. The public has no interest, no feeling, no prejudice; it is therefore, like a thermometer, infallible in its decisions. People often make the mistake that the ostrich is said to make. This bird hides its head in the sand and imagines that its whole body is concealed.

In the primitive state of man, each individual judges and decides for himself, as every man should do at all times. Trials and courts and governments are an abomination in the land, and it is a fact that such institutions, in the earlier ages of the world, did not exist. These institutions are the accumulated results of aggressiveness and usurpation on the part of designing and ambitious men, continued for an indefinite time. They are designed for the promotion of evil and not for the accomplishment of good.

We must remember that, even in the earlier centuries in which our ancestors lived, courts and trials were by no means what they are now. There was no production of evidence, and no pretence to proof of any kind. It was a mere lottery; the whole business was left with God. It was an ordeal, a decision of Providence, a victory for the strongest—or perhaps for the shrewdest and most influential. As a matter of fact, no one pretends that anything was *proved* against the defendant. It was then a question of men and means, a matter of force and artifice, as it is still. Even now a man makes little progress in law without friends to aid him and plenty of means at his command. Without the help of these agencies, he might as well surrender at discretion and leave the field at once.

Again, we say trials decide absolutely nothing that was not decided when the battle began. All that is done in law is simply to give one party or the other the advantage. It would be impossible for the government to be on both sides, and so it must choose between the parties—and this is precisely what is done in every case. For instance, a man has been killed in a railroad accident. His friends, being lovers of money, demand ten thousand dollars, or perhaps one hundred thousand dollars, as a balm for their wounded feelings. The company say the demand is exorbitant. As no doubt it is. But who shall decide? Who shall say whether the company shall pay ten thousand or one hundred thousand, or nothing at all? The court decides—a party that really knows nothing of the case and has no interest either way! The court decides. And how manifestly unjust is



its decision! The railroad company probably have control of a large amount of funds. But what right has any outside party to touch a dollar of their money or to demand an apportionment? Right in any of its phases, in such a case, cannot possibly be said to enter into the consideration of the subject. Whether the verdict in this instance should be ten dollars, or a thousand, or a million, who shall presume to declare? Clearly any one of these sums is as near to being just as either of the other two. The whole case is determined by the question how much a man demands and how much, by good luck or other means, he can succeed in obtaining. The word justice should not be thought of or mentioned in any such connection. As between men and men, there is no justice. Justice is a matter of power. There is no other justice than that which comes from power. What good would it do a man to have rights, to have justice on his side, if these things could not be enforced? Justice is simply what is commanded, and if nothing were commanded, if nothing were settled, of course there could be no justice. Without the decision of courts in some form, we should never know what justice is. Justice in courts lies wholly in the *verdict, and nowhere else*.

It must be remembered that it is force—pure brute force in the end—that settles all questions of law. If a verdict could not be enforced, there would be no need of having one. Men submit not because they wish, not because they consider the verdict just, but because they must. It is the lesser of two evils to submit; not to submit might cause them more pain than to pursue the other course. If men were stronger, or even more courageous, than they are they would not submit, and then there would be no occasion for trials, and certainly no occasion for judgments and executions. Such things are available only for those who are ready to submit. We submit to the robber only because he has us at a disadvantage. Perhaps he has more guns than we have, or those of a better make. Men submit not because they desire to submit, or because they feel that they have been justly treated, but because they see no other avenue open to them. In other words, we submit to the powers above because we know we are slaves and are willing to go on playing the servile part a while longer. We are told it is the people's will that we should obey. But the people's will is a farce. There is no people's will; there is no people in the first place, none in the proper sense of the term. There are some men and women, but no body of men besides these.

We hear about fair trials. But there never was such a thing as a fair trial, that is, fair to both sides. What is fair to one man is always an injustice to another man.

People pretend to love fairness in all cases, and no doubt they really think they do. But if they love fairness, how can they believe in trials and battles? These contests are never fair—they never can be fair. The parties are never of equal strength, and one always gets the advantage over the other in some way. No, people should forever banish the absurd notion that there can be such things as fair combats. Was Dewey's battle at Manilla in any sense fair to the conquered party? Was Schley's battle at Santiago a sample of fair play? Was Schley's trial in Washington fair, or that of Dreyfus in Paris fair? Is it fair to the exhausted fox to be chased by the overpowering hounds? Are the bull fights of Madrid fair to the bull? No, there is no fairness in conflicts at any time. If they were fair, there could be no victories, for the forces would be evenly balanced. Is fairness to be found anywhere? Even justice is always one-sided. In every case of justice, one loses what the other gains.

All courts, condemnations and convictions must be overthrown eventually. They are contrary to the enlightened spirit of the age. They are against truth, against justice, against common sense, against all ideas of fairness, and against all the prevailing tendencies of the present day. Wrongs are tolerated by people simply because they have not opened their eyes and come to view them as wrongs. There is no one great judge, and so there ought to be no little judges. Next to an executioner, and hardly next, is a judge—a common man who convicts other men and hands them over to be executed! Is a judge a better man than other men in any one respect? Does he know more, is he more gifted, is he purer, is he more infallible? Whence comes his commission? From common men, always from men like himself—and besides from men who are in no sense worthier or better than the prisoner whom he convicts. It is a serious mistake, a great misconception, to suppose for a moment that judges as a class are better or wiser than other men. They are always taken from the common walks of life—they are never godlike, they are only men.

The absurd doctrine that is constantly taught to the unsuspecting believer in connection with the divine right of kings, or at least with the divine right of government, is that trials transform old facts in some way, or at least develop new ones; that the verdict of the court or jury gives to men rights, privileges and sanctions that they could not obtain in any other way! The right to kill, to murder, to torture, to destroy, or at least to immure offending persons in some dreadful dungeon! And what is a trial? Nothing but a flimsy formality, a mere ceremony

without the slightest efficacy or value. All that is gained by a lawsuit is to enable a man to learn what his enemies have to say against him. Nothing more. Fairness is never at home in a lawsuit, any more than it is in a contest on the battle field or between two men who have met to kill each other. In all combats one side is weaker than the other.

The foundation of the trial lies in the oath. A trial is supposed to differ from a common transaction because in the trial men swear to what they say, and thus God is brought into court and becomes interested in the proceedings in some unexplainable manner. But what an uncertain and unsafe foundation is that which is supposed to be found in an oath! It is as chimerical as God is himself.

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## CHAPTER XX.

### JUSTICE AND REVENGE.

What is Justice? Like everything else, it is merely what we think it is, and consequently what is justice for one may not necessarily be justice for another. What men think and believe is affected largely by what they conceive to be their personal interests; and as men's interests differ, their thoughts and conclusions in regard to justice differ. Hence justice varies with parties, with sects, with countries, with climates, with conditions. There is no justice such as we conceive it to be—no justice for everybody, nor for all time.

What sort of an example of justice did God himself set? He sacrificed his only begotten son, who presented in his person the noblest and purest form of humanity yet known to man. Such a being was sacrificed in a most cruel and unjust manner, not for any sins that he had committed, but to relieve a lot of sinful and rebellious people from the penalty of their own transgressions. What a conception of right and duty is exhibited in this remarkable transaction! It was evidently God's purpose to favor a number of wicked people who had no merit and who deserved no favors. At whose expense? At the expense of Christ. *That happens in all cases where favors are bestowed and sacrifices are made.* Some one must be sacrificed and some one must pay the expense of the favors granted. Usually the

burden in such cases falls upon those who are entirely innocent. In the case above referred to, Christ was the Lamb that was offered to God, his father, by his father! Is there any justice to be found anywhere that corresponds with what we have all along believed justice to be? Do men suffer for their sins? Do men suffer solely for their own sins? No, most of our sufferings arise from the folly, ignorance, stupidity, recklessness or willfulness of other people. In all cases of sacrifice, of which we have many examples daily, it is the innocent one that is converted into a scape-goat to save transgressors from the penalties they have incurred. We are continually paying debts that we have not contracted, and bearing burdens that belong on other people's shoulders. How many individuals are killed or crippled daily through the greed or carelessness of others! Children suffer for the wrongs of the parents, and parents for the wrongs of their children. Whole communities, and sometimes a corporation, suffer grievously for the shortcomings of some of their members.

What is justice? It is time that we had new views on this subject. At present we are all astray on the matter. We really do not know much about the nature of justice, though we are continually talking about it. What is just for one man must always be unjust for others, as what is left for one man is right for another man, and what is east from one place is west from another place.

Justice is simply what is commanded—that is what the word meant in its original signification. If we had no government, no commands could be given, and we should therefore have no such thing as justice. Men in their native or natural state do not talk about justice. Justice is revenge, compensation, making things even, an eye for an eye; and it implies a judge who shall decide what is the proper measure of compensation. *Justice is always a good thing for a few people, and a bad thing for a great many others.*

Justice is feelingless, merciless, cruel. It is an iron rule that is destitute of all flexibility, all elasticity. Justice identifies itself in all cases with law; like the law, which must always be fulfilled, justice must be done though the heavens fall. Law and justice are both inflexible; they never adapt themselves to circumstances in any case. Justice always carries a sword, and it is blind. It cuts down everything in its path, the guilty and the innocent alike. Justice carries a pair of scales, but it can weigh only things that are lawful and things that are unlawful. Whether things are right or wrong, cannot be determined by the balance that Justice carries.

To be just, a man must first know what justice is. But how



shall he become enlightened on that point? At best it is simply what some people think or what some people say. *Justice, as already indicated, is wholly a matter of law in some form.* It rests entirely upon decisions and opinions. Truth and justice are similar in character, and both are alike evanescent. There is no justice outside of these narrow limits.

We continually argue about justice and fairness, but is there any justice and fairness to all men in everyday life? Is war fair? Is law fair? Is business fair? In war, in law, in business the helpless and the destitute are always taken at a disadvantage. Is there any fairness in forcing a man to pay our prices simply because he is in need? Is there any fairness in a man's getting rich by the profits he makes? Things may be legitimate and yet not fair.

There remains one more phase of justice to be considered, namely this, that praise, protection, and favors of all kinds, can never be just to all parties. To applaud one person is an implied censure, or at least a reflection, upon all others who come in the same connection. To say that one man in a concert did well is to indicate or imply that some one else, or all the rest, did not do so well. So everybody rises at the expense of some one else. When one end of the board goes up the other end must go down. You cannot separate extremes. They always go by couples. When you give to a few you wrong those to whom you do not give. To be just one must give to all. To save one of two drowning men, is to let the other man perish, and it is clearly an act of injustice. To put one man above another, is the same as putting the latter below the former. The result is precisely the same and the act cannot be called justice in either instance.

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The transition from Justice to Revenge is easy, for there is but little difference between the two. What feature appears most conspicuous in the history of all peoples, especially people in their early stages? It is revenge, combined generally with some redeeming qualities—a mixture of the good and bad, kindness in one direction with deliberate cruelty in another direction, unbounded hospitality in some cases with the most heartless cruelty and injustice in other cases. The natural impulse of savages is to kill those whom they dread, those who have offended them, or those who have done them some injury. Killing enemies seems to them to be the most effective measure of safety. When a man is dead, they consider that he is out of the way. Revenge is peculiarly a characteristic of people in the savage

state. In revenge they imagine that they find their chief source of self-protection.

But revenge, like force of every kind, continues to act and react indefinitely. When one man kills another, that is rarely the end of the business. The victim has friends, and the murderer has friends, and thus feuds arise. If revenge is a good practice for one side, it ought to be equally good for the other side; and it is good as well to-morrow and forever as it is to-day. Thus it is that revenge tends to operate in all cases. Instead of being a remedy for disease, it opens new wounds. No, revenge cannot under any circumstances be considered a remedy. Its work is always that of a madman, of a man who acts from a morbid impulse and takes no thought of consequences. We have revenge in punishment; in fact punishment is always prompted by revenge. But does punishment ever improve matters? Is it a balm? Does it ever heal wounds? Does it afford protection? No, it is a powerful incentive to renewed attacks. Does it give us peace and happiness, or even prosperity? Does it afford improvement in any form or in any direction? No, revenge is the demon of destruction; its ultimate aim in all cases is total annihilation. Revenge is madness: it leads us to suffer much in order to be enabled to see our enemies suffer more.

Does revenge ever prevent war? No, it is the cause of war. And is war a remedy? Does it promote happiness and prosperity? No, it is well known that war, like revenge, ends in destruction. Do we get peace by fighting? No, we get more fighting. War seldom ends till one party or the other is annihilated or exhausted. Peace does not come from fighting but from some other cause—from the cessation of fighting. People never think of peace until they are tired of fighting or unable to continue the contest. People never talk or think about peace so long as they are strong and in good fighting condition.

Peace is something that is always to be favored. People prosper in peace, but they never prosper while engaged in war. Fighting destroys, but it never improves; it never supplies a people with a better character or alters their old convictions in any essential respect. Changes among people must come, like changes in individuals, from within. External influences cannot alone change character. We may add that people never gain their liberties by fighting; but they usually secure new masters. The American colonies fought the mother government to gain their liberties, but they only succeeded in changing masters, and they have masters even at this day. As to taxes, about which our forefathers complained so bitterly, we have ten or twenty times as much *per capita* as the Revolutionary fathers ever had. So it has been with France since the revolution of 1789.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### PUNISHMENT AND TORTURE.

Punishment under any circumstances is diabolical. It is an inheritance that has come down to us from barbarous times, and as such it deserves to be condemned and reprobated by every worthy citizen. To punish means to inflict pain upon those who have given us offense, and the motive that prompts us is the pleasure we feel in seeing them writhe and suffer. Revenge is the beginning and end of punishment.

What good results from such an operation? Absolutely none at all, either to the one that suffers or to the one who causes the suffering. Sometimes it is said that we punish to prevent crime. But we know as a matter of fact that punishment does not prevent crime, certainly not the crime that has been committed, and the evidence all goes to show that punishment does not even lessen crime. No, we punish people because they deserve it, because our Bible says so, because we have always done that way and because we are exasperated and want revenge. That is reason enough, the people think.

Notice that we do not punish all people, but only those who have done wrong. Who says they have done wrong? We say so. But how do we know? Who made us the judge over our fellow men, under any circumstances? Christ says: "Judge not." And still we try men, we judge men, we convict them, we punish them. The prisoner himself never has a word to say about the business. Is that not passing strange? How did the criminal, as we call the one whom we do not happen to like, lose his rights? The convict in state prison has properly as many rights as any man has who lives outside of prison walls. We can imprison a man, we can cut off his ears or sever his head—but it is not in the power of any human being to take from him his vested or natural rights as a man and a citizen.

When one man murders another man, and we, having the

power in our own hands, hang the murderer, what is the difference in the crime in the two cases? No difference, except that the murder by hanging a man is the most cold blooded of the two. When a crime is committed in the name and under the sanction of the law, how does it differ from a crime committed under other circumstances? There is an excuse for it, a justification, they say! Who says so? Why, the party that wants to be excused says so. But the party that suffers does not say so. Excuses have never yet changed the character of any act of wrong doing. Excuses do not excuse England in India and South Africa, nor Germany for its crimes in China. If there is a hell, and we sometimes suspect there is, or there ought to be, it must be paved with such excuses. Was there ever a crime committed in all this world that did not have some excuse to justify it, in the mind at least of the one who is guilty of the offense? When Alexander killed Clitus, did he not have an excuse? Clitus was impertinent, and besides Alexander was drunk—a very good excuse indeed, for a king. Henry VIII. had a most satisfactory excuse for disposing of his several wives as he did—he wanted them out of the way. Old Blue Beard had excellent excuses in the same direction. When Napoleon had three thousand Turkish prisoners murdered at Jaffa, he had as good a reason for his crime as any man ever had, in his own mind. We stand horror stricken and think of the suffering caused by the Inquisitors and by religious persecutions generally, in the Middle Ages. But let us turn our thoughts nearer home and see if we to-day are in any sense better than those Inquisitors and persecutors of which we complain so bitterly. For those people the heretic was the very worst of criminals, and so, as they imagined, they had a right to torture and torment the offender. We do precisely the same thing every time we imprison or torture a prisoner under any pretence. We not only cause him pain just to see him writhe and suffer, but we make his family wretched and often leave them desolate and heart-stricken. These frightful crimes are committed every day, in some part of the land, with the sanction of law and in the name of God. We think it is horrible to lynch a man, but that is simply because it is not lawful. But doubtless it hurts a man just as badly to be hung on a gallows as to the limb of a tree. Finally, what makes it right to punish offenders as we do? Nothing but the opinions of the people. If we could get people to change their opinions on the question, punishments would cease at once, and so would crimes and offences. That is the way that chattel slavery ceased—people simply changed their minds, and what was right before is wrong now.



How unnecessary, how unjust, how cruel, how horrible it is to *punish men* for no other reason than that we have them at our mercy and they have in some way offended us! *It must be remembered that criminals are simply and solely those who have done what we consider wrong.* But they are not in fact a whit worse than ourselves, or than people are generally. They have been bold enough, or injudicious enough to do what they thought was right and what we thought was wrong. That was the sole cause of their misfortune and the source of their offending. What is worse than all, they happened to be in the minority.

We torture and punish people, not in self defence, not to protect ourselves, but to make them do as we want them to do, and above all to have them adopt our creed and follow our mode of action. But are we any better in this respect than they who lived in the Middle Ages? Did they do any worse than we are doing every day? Were they more wicked or more merciless than we are? No, all our punishments are pure tortures, and the spirit that prompts this persecution is the contemptible and villainous spirit that moved those who lived and ruled in Europe from the 5th to the 15th centuries. Men want to be masters, they want their own way, they want to exercise power, they delight in being cruel to their enemies and to unbelievers at all times.

Probably nine-tenths of all the worst crimes—robberies, murder and arson especially—go unpunished, because the criminal is never detected. And still, absurdly enough, people believe that we could not get along without punishing crime as we do! If we let nine-tenths of our worst criminals escape, what harm would there be if we let the other tenth escape, at least with a light punishment? We might resist evil, but we should not punish evil doers in the customary manner. We should not contend with them.

We hear much about the will of the people. But if it was the will of the people, there would be no need of force. There would be no demand for an army or police to enforce that will. We have government and apply force to secure action that is against the will of the people. The "people" always means some people, or a few people, and generally they are only a favored and aggressive portion of the whole mass of people.

When will we come to see and realize that criminals are people that are to be pitied, not tortured or despised? They never can lose their right to fair, manly, Christian treatment under any circumstances. Why not treat them as if they were insane, or misdirected, or perhaps lacking that element of self control which other people possess? Under no circumstances can a man

justify his own wrongs by the wrongs of his neighbor or his enemy. We are all criminals in one way or another.

This is the one great doctrine: You cannot change the character of an act by any process whatever after it is done. It cannot be excused, palliated, justified or compensated for by doing some other act, no matter how meritorious. One act has nothing to do with another act, and it has no connection with it in any manner. No man or set of men can take away the rights of another man—no one can deprive him of his manhood or citizenship, or of his rights to either of those things. We can only repeat what we have often said: One man is as good as any other man, and he has as many rights and privileges under all circumstances.

Some people imagine that fifty or one hundred rights ought to balance at least one wrong; or if a man has done us a thousand favors, we ought to be ashamed of being offended if he decides to do us one mortal injury. But our theory is all wrong in this case. One act has no connection with another act, and the good done at one time can by no possible contrivance be made to balance the evil of another time. If a man is really a friend of ours, he would be incapable of doing us a willful injury at any time. No matter how much of a friend a man may have been to us in the past, he is an enemy of ours if he steps aside to give us offence or do us an injury now. It is what a man is to-day that concerns us—not what he was yesterday or a year ago. We judge only of things as we find them at the present time—the past is gone forever. It is a very common thing to find that a man has been our friend for years, but for some reason unknown to ourself, he is our enemy now. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, it will be found that the cause of his being offended was purely a matter of imagination or a misunderstanding on his part. Those who ought never to wrong or offend us are those who claim to be our friends.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE DELUSIVENESS OF POWER.

Instead of studying the subject of matter and material so persistently as we do, we should give more attention to the mind and its operations. We should strive to ascertain the nature and capabilities of what we call intellect, and above all, we should endeavor to determine whether such a thing as mind independent of matter really exists. It certainly must be independent if it exists at all. Perhaps we shall find that mind and spirits vanish on close inspection, as God vanishes whenever he is approached. We find that gods, demons and spirits are pure shadows, mere conceptions with which mankind have been diverting themselves from time immemorial, but which they are now inclined to exchange for something more tangible, more substantial and more useful in practical life.

We have believed in spirits, invisible beings and imponderable fluids for a long period. Let us try at last to find something more in accordance with reason and the spirit of the times. We know something of the changes and developments of matter, but we know practically nothing as yet of the instrumentalities through which the mind is affected. Is there any mind outside of our own notions? We not only have inadequate and incorrect ideas on this subject, but we have actually conjured up forms and conceptions that have no substantial foundation on which to rest. We have not only magnified and modified certain phenomena, we have even introduced new creations of our own.

For a long time we have supposed that the world was moved by God, and that its operations were controlled and directed by his power exclusively. We have supposed that an all-wise and ever-alert Providence cares for all creatures, and that all things which come to pass must happen through divine permission alone. What God does not do, or does not permit, it has been

believed, cannot be accomplished. No other part has been left for man to play in life's drama than one of passive obedience and strict inactivity. Another conception that long prevailed was this, that everything, every substance, no matter how insignificant, was moved by its own spirit, its own agent, its own God. But we are glad to notice that sensible men generally are now abandoning such unfounded notions as these, and, as we trust, for all time. It is now known that matter, like men and animals, is endowed with its own power, and that it has no need of any supernatural agency nor the assistance of any God. Is there any need of mind? Does matter need guidance? No, it has its own place and direction, and these it always preserves.

Throughout the whole range of matter, from the highest and most elaborate forms down to the lowest and simplest, one system is seen to prevail, one idea, one uniform character throughout. The horse does not differ from man in character or conception in any essential particular: the tree does not materially differ from the horse, and the crystal, the rock, and inert matter of all kinds, does not differ, again, from the tree or plant. Man has a higher plane of development, as we view the matter, than the rest of creation, and that is the most that can be said in his behalf. Man, indeed, thinks and reasons, and in a manner he creates new forms, or rather he makes new combinations. And the horse also thinks, but only as the child thinks, always in the simplest and most primitive manner. Even the plant perceives and feels; and if we keep that fact well in view, we are forced to conclude that the plant also has reason, though of course it is reason in its incipient stages. The plant, like man and animals, has its likes and dislikes. It covets the light; it grasps for support and clings persistently to some more substantial form. It selects its food, choosing what is pleasing and rejecting what is not, precisely as animals do. Why shall we say that the plant does not reason? And does not the crystal, in its growth and progressive formation, choose and reject according to its apparent preference? Does it not proceed in its development in a regular, uniform and systematic manner? Why shall we concede that the animal has mind, a soul, while to the crystal and the rock this gift is denied? There is no good reason for any such distinction.

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Eventually a radical change must be introduced into all our ideas of power—and particularly in that very common conception prevailing among men that one thing has an actual in-



fluence upon some other thing and that it possesses in its character some mysterious principle of control. It is evident that there is, and there can be in nature, no such irresistible power. Simply because a certain result follows, or a certain phenomenon is observed, we are not justified in the conclusion that some power has been exerted and some effect produced. The appearance that we notice may be an incident, or a mere coincidence. If two men appear at a certain place at a certain time, we are not permitted to infer as a matter of course that one has compelled the other or even that they have met by appointment. People may be riding in the same boat or car in the same direction, and perhaps towards the same objective point, without even knowing each other or having any relations of any kind, or without any suspicion that influence has been exerted in any way. That a man rises or departs when another appears is no proof in itself of anything like either compulsion or repulsion. And so again that iron filings follow the magnet, or appear excited when it is brought near, is no proof that the magnet exerts upon them some strange and unknown power. A man may obey a law, and still afford no evidence that the law exerts any power over his movements. We know indeed that no law has any power. That a man takes a medicine and gets well is absolutely no proof of the virtue or remedial power of the medicine. Some men take medicine and die, and many men get well and never consult a doctor. That a body falls to the earth is no proof of itself of the earth's attraction. We know that as a matter of fact the earth does not attract bodies. Some things are incapable of proof, and the earth's attraction is one of them. If the magnet were so powerful as to attract bodies, it would attract all bodies, wood and stone, for example. That the magnet attracts iron in particular shows that the power depends as much upon the nature of the iron as it does upon the magnet. It is like so many other cases where power is supposed to be exerted and yet the undertaking fails because the conditions are not favorable, proving that it all depends upon circumstances, and that power alone is insufficient. In all cases where power is supposed to be exerted, the nature of the object acted upon has more to do with the success of the performance than has the power itself. Nobody can do things that are impossible. Even Christ, the son of God, could do no mighty work in certain localities. In order that a man may do miracles, the first condition to be met is that the people must believe that miracles can be done. That a person follows an order given, is proof only that he chooses or decides to obey. It is really the nature of the object itself that leads to its moving. Every object, for all practical purposes, has will—

all matter has will. A ball rolls, but a box does not. An apple falls, but a toy balloon rises. A boat floats, but a stone sinks. Everything follows its own impulses, the tendencies of its own nature, and it is never governed in its course by the nature, impulses or power of any other object. Nobody, nothing, is compelled or influenced. In hypnotism, the effect depends not upon the operator and his power, but upon the state or tendencies of the subject. If the subject be a good one, he succeeds: but if the subject prove not to be susceptible, then the experiment results in failure. The power of the operator must remain the same in all cases, and yet sometimes he succeeds and sometimes he fails, proving that his power alone is not sufficient. In fact, results demonstrate that he has no such power as he pretends to possess. The success always depends upon the subject and not upon the operator. The power of the hypnotist lies simply in suggestion—the subject follows a suggestion and yields to manipulation.

The more light we gain on the subject, the more clearly it is seen that we must change our whole creed in relation to what this or that person achieves or what this or that power accomplishes. It is evident enough that nobody attains any object by his own exertion independently of all other agencies. Everything is blocked in like the boulder in the glacier, and it never moves except as the mass moves. It has no independent movement of its own and it always maintains the same relative position to the bodies in its vicinity.

To know what power, even what supreme power is able to accomplish, consider the career of our God, and especially that of the pagan gods of former ages. How far did their power extend? Was it unlimited? No, it was always conditional. They were easily thwarted. Their success, quite as well as that of men, depended largely upon circumstances. Even great Jupiter was far from accomplishing all that he undertook. He was always in trouble and things often went contrary to his wishes—sometimes with Juno, his wife, sometimes with his children and sometimes with the other gods. And how was it with Jehovah? He commanded, but he was not always obeyed. He had no cause for contention with his wife, for fortunately he had none, but he had any amount of conflict with his disobedient and rebellious children. The Devil was always interfering with his plans, and it often happened that the latter came off victorious. God gave our first parents their commands, but how did that affair terminate? To punish was the extent of God's power; to enforce his demands, was found to be quite beyond the range of possibility. He could bribe or threaten, but when such means

failed, he was absolutely powerless. Beyond doubt all the omnipotence and omniscience of gods lie in the minds of men.

Men have the same power that gods have—no more and no less. They can reward and punish, they can frighten and cajole, and when such means are insufficient, they are painfully helpless. People who are really powerful should have everything to their own liking, but no such people have ever yet been discovered. As we have already noticed, even gods have their troubles and disappointments like feeble mortals.

What is an emperor? The feeblest, most helpless of beings! He can accomplish nothing without the help of others. He must have an army, he must have courtiers, servants and a crown, all of which come from the people. Like all else that we find in this world, he is nothing but a phenomenon, a mere fleeting show. Of himself he is nothing. The lowest rascal can assassinate him whenever he finds an opportunity. Talk about the king's power and possessions! Why, even the clothes he wears are bought with the money of other people. He depends upon his subjects even for the food that he eats. He holds his crown by permission of the people, and his life is always at their disposal. He does not work himself, and hence, individually, he accomplishes nothing. In this world everything depends upon something, in some way. Capital depends upon labor, and labor upon capital. How powerful was Goliath? Little David slew him with a pebble and the help of a sling. A pigmy skilled in the use of poison can quickly remove the most powerful monarch on earth. Talk about strength! It is vanity, a pure delusion. Strength of numbers! How readily was Napoleon overthrown with his six hundred thousand men! And how was it with Xerxes? The rich become poor and the poor rich. Where is the difference? If a man were really powerful of his own might, his strength could never be taken from him, and yet we know that there is nothing so evanescent as riches and power. Nothing is more ephemeral. What is it that beings possess of which they can never be deprived? Men can lose that only which never properly belonged to them. A man who is strong in his own might never becomes weak. But no such men have ever yet been known.

It must not be forgotten that in all teaching, all cases of representation and in all communication by words, signs or illustrations, we never get more than an approximation to the ideas of the teacher. We never see things as he sees them and we never understand them as he intended. When we talk about a house, we have one picture or image in our mind, and the learner has in his mind a picture or image which is different. We can-

not communicate new or unknown ideas ; neither can we introduce new notions or remodel old ones. How could we describe to a man something that he had never seen and of which he knew nothing ? We would simply say it was undescribable, unless we could point to something which it resembled.

Again, we ask what is power ? Where shall we find its true exemplification ? We speak of the power of proof, the power of speech, the power of music, the power of eloquence. But is there any such power that we could rely upon at all times and upon all occasions ? The power of speech and music is like the power of medicine. Sometimes it seems to be effective and at other times it proves an absolute failure. Some people are affected by music and some by eloquence, and some again are impressed at one time and not at another. But if medicine or music or eloquence has the power that is claimed, it should exhibit that power at all times and not fail in a single instance. However, there is no such medicine, and there is no such music or eloquence. And so it is with the power of light, the power of justice, or power of any kind. Light and justice evidently have no power inherent in themselves. What is justice for one man is not considered justice by another ; and so it is in the case of evidence which is supposed to amount to proof. Evidence that makes a strong impression upon some people is entirely without effect upon others. It all depends upon the subject or person himself, his inclinations and his susceptibilities.

The great question, and one that is not readily answered, is this : How are men moved, how are they compelled ? Are they really moved or are they compelled ? How are they induced to act ? One thing is certain : Men never submit to outside control, and no one can properly be held responsible for the acts of other people. What men do is done of their own free will, and never under any other conditions. People always do what they prefer to do, choose to do, wish to do. Power over men, and even over things, is an expression that should become obsolete. We are not even taught—we learn, and this we do by growing. If we did not grow, we should not learn, no matter what influences might be supposed to be operating in our favor. No man can even help us in any way, no man can do for us what we should have done for ourselves. Nobody can take our place and do our work. No man can do our thinking. Vicarious service of any kind, for us, is of no avail. What some one else does we do not do, nor is it possible that it should aid us in any manner. If a man helps us lift a piece of timber, as we say, what he really does is to lift one part of the timber while we lift another, and his work is entirely independent of our work.



It is clear that every man controls his own will absolutely, and what he does is of his own volition. People enslave themselves, they are never enslaved by others. To control men, their will must be reached, and that is impossible under any circumstances. The most important question in this connection is this: How far are men subject to that mysterious agency known as hypnotic influence? There is something in such an agency, though for the present we are compelled to confess that we know little of its capabilities and still less of its true value. The author still maintains that there is no such thing as compulsion, as the term is commonly understood, but he is ready to grant that there is much in the influence of suggestion. There is no doubt that we encounter hypnotic influences in everything around us. There is for us expression and suggestion, and even temptation, in all that we see and hear. We are continually impressed by this act or that act, this word or that word. We are indeed, as has been so often remarked, creatures of imitation, and we are constantly influenced by what we hear others say and what we see others do. The influence of suggestion is wonderful indeed. Men and women imitate, children imitate, and even the lower animals imitate. We not only gape when we see others gape, but we stop and stare when we see others stare. It is to this contagious principle that we must trace the wild and unreasoning action, at times, of men in crowds and animals in herds. The tendency is for each individual to do what he sees those around him do and to believe what he observes that others believe. There is no question at all that men are influenced by their surroundings, not through any power actually exerted upon them, but through the important principle of suggestion—or, if another term is preferred, through hypnotism. Even the subject in the state submits cheerfully because of the fact that he is practically hypnotized. The splendor of the court dazzles his eyes, and the power of the army strikes terror to his soul. There is not the slightest sign of compulsion in this instance—it is a pure case of hypnotism. He might decline to observe and he might refuse to obey, but he is transfixed, and through fear and reverence, two most unworthy feelings for men, he falls down and worships his lord and master. In religious matters he acts in precisely the same manner because he submits to the same influences.

There is another way of demonstrating the impossibility of any such agency as power over others. There is no possible means by which power over sentient beings could be maintained. There is no way by which we may reach the will of others, but it is known that it is the will alone that controls action and de-

termines conduct. Intelligent beings observe and feel, and what they perceive and feel alone affects their decision and resolution. In this manner men are influenced, and in no other. There is, it is well known, no possible way by which we can compel people to think, talk, or believe, or indeed to do anything that we happen to desire. Our whole power seems to be confined to the causing of trouble or inflicting pain—in other words to punishment, which is a poor compensation for what we may have endeavored to do, but failed to accomplish.

So far we have been considering the power of men over men, of creatures with thought and feeling over other beings also possessed of thought and feeling. Now we come to the question of the power which beings of intelligence are supposed to exert over inert and inanimate matter. Is there any such power as that which men are believed to exert upon things? What influence does mind have over matter? Does it have any influence whatever? The answer to that question will develop as the discussion proceeds. Intelligence or mind has control over matter or substance only so far as matter is influenced or compelled in its movements by the will or spirit of some living being. And where do we find an exemplification of any such influence? As a matter of fact will has no influence upon matter. Matter never obeys commands; matter has neither feeling nor intelligence, and hence it cannot receive commands. What influence could the most powerful man exert upon a stone for instance? A stone never does anything, if for no other reason because it is destitute of feeling and intelligence and therefore it has no will. A man might take up a stone and carry it any distance, and still the stone would be as passive and inert as if it were still lying in the quarry from which it was originally taken. In this case the stone has done absolutely nothing, and therefore it could not have been influenced by any outside power. If we could compel the trees to dance, the rocks to sing or the waters to laugh, we might indeed boast of the miraculous power which we possessed. But unfortunately there are no such instances on record. We can cast a stone with a sling or hurl it with our hand, but the effort is wholly and solely ours. It is our will that causes the movement, and the stone ceases to move from the moment when the force which projected it has been expended. How shall we say that we have compelled the stone to do anything? It is not in our power to change the character of the stone in any way, nor even to determine its career or fate. We can transport it, but it remains the same stone as before. We can even crush it, and yet we have not destroyed it. Shall we say the stone has disappeared simply because it has crumbled?

We have seen that mind, intelligence, will, cannot affect matter, and now comes up this question: Can matter affect the mind or will, or can it exert any power over other matter? We find no evidence that any such influence exists. Power at all times implies not only effort but direction also. There can be no power but conscious power which has some well defined object of its own in view. Power that depends upon accident or chance has none of the characteristics of real power. Power is manifested by the things which beings do and by what they accomplish. Inanimate matter, a log for instance, has no will, no intelligence, no purpose, and therefore it never can be said to effect or accomplish any result. It is absolutely destitute of power, and when it moves, it does so only so far as some other body moves with which it happens to be associated or connected. We are continually talking about the power of things, of the sun for example. But what does the sun do for ourselves, or for other objects? Does the sun have us in view at any time? Does it seek to warm us, or burn us, or affect us in any manner? Probably not. Does the sun make any exertion to warm the earth? No body can exert power unless it makes an effort and experiences fatigue. It must also have purpose or design. It certainly must be that the sun possesses no power, or at least that it never attempts to exert any power over other bodies. We talk also about the power of God, most omnipotent of all beings. But what can God do? Only what is possible or natural, or in other words, only what has been done already. God could not make the rocks weep, nor could he change the character of the most simple of earth's productions. God may have done miracles in the remote past, but he does no miracles at present. He seems to have lost that gift, if he ever possessed it.

There is one case of apparent power of one body over another that we do not understand, and which therefore we cannot explain, and that is the case of the magnet, with all the phenomena that belong in that connection. It is believed that the magnet attracts iron, but does it really do so? That has not yet been demonstrated. To repeat what we have already said in this connection: That one body meets another, is no proof that it has been attracted. Bodies often meet from other causes and under other conditions. There are plenty of cases, as we have said, where bodies meet, and there is no suspicion of attraction. They meet at times by accident, at times by force or impulsion, at times through will or desire. If the magnet had any drawing power, it would draw all bodies, certainly all metals. But it only acts in certain exceptional cases and the meeting of the iron and the magnet results as much from the nature of the

former as from the power of the latter. We could with as much propriety say that the iron seeks the magnet as that it is attracted by the magnet.

And really, if there is any such thing as power, as has long been talked about, it must lie chiefly in the resistance which comes from inert matter. It is well known that there can be no action without reaction and no effort or exertion without there being something that resists. What could the strongest of men do if there were not something to be done? No one can conquer worlds unless there are worlds to conquer. If we want to neutralize power, we must remove resistance. Nobody can fight unless he finds somebody to oppose him. If everybody obeyed the laws, there would be nothing for the state to do; and in fact the state has a direct interest in developing resistance and revolution. What is the sense of keeping a police and a standing army, if there is not something with which to occupy their attention? If we did not confine steam, it would be perfectly harmless; and even dynamite of itself need not give us any concern, if we simply keep out of its way and leave it alone. It is not gunpowder that does the damage, it is the explosion. If the tornado met with no resistance, nobody would be injured. The tornado makes a disturbance and demolishes things only when it fails to have the whole world to itself and meets with serious opposition. If a gas burns slowly in a stove and we make room for it, we experience no trouble. It is only when a large quantity is ignited in an instant that disaster results. For an instant, air or water affords as much resistance as would be found in an iron barrier or a solid stone wall, but when a little time is allowed, the air or water yields readily, while the iron barrier does not. It is a mistake to suppose there is any inherent power in inert matter. There certainly is none in such agents as gas, steam or gunpowder, which are usually supposed to be remarkably dangerous. Chemicals have no power until they are destroyed or transmuted, by combustion or otherwise.

It must be remembered that strength or power is a very uncertain and variable quantity. A man who is strong at one time or in one case, is weak in another. Everything depends upon the advantages that a man has to favor him in his undertaking. A man with the help of a harness has more strength than he has without a harness. A pound will balance a pound only on one condition, namely, that the fulcrum should be at the middle of the beam. Every man who has handled scales knows that he can so adjust the beam that one pound will weigh ten pounds. Archimides was undoubtedly correct when he remarked that if he had a lever long enough and a prop solid enough, he could



lift the world. Again, we repeat, nothing is so variable, so uncertain and so evanescent as power, and under no circumstances would a sensible man boast of his strength or of his superior advantages. A man's strength is never his own, and that is true of a man's advantages.

Power can be effective only when it produces something new, something that did not exist before. But where do we find an exemplification of such an agency? We can do, really, only what is already done; we can create or produce only what always existed. If God created the world, it must have been a world before he created it. If a man builds a house, he creates nothing, not a single particle that did not exist before—and when completed, it is merely a new combination of old material, corresponding to a plan in the mind of the architect formed before the work began. If a piece of rock is cleft, or a piece of wood is rent, a seam or cleft is followed in each case that existed before the rent was made. The separation is made wider than before—nothing more. Again, we must say, we never do anything that was not done before. *No operation can develop new individuals.* They must have existed from eternity. If a piece of plate glass breaks or cracks, the fracture always follows lines that must have existed from the beginning, though perhaps they were not visible.

Another illustration in this connection is found in the case of figures. Take a case of multiplication. We put down five and then six under it, we draw a line, and say the product is thirty! What have we developed that is new? Has not five times six always been thirty? What have we done to the five, or what have we done with the six? Absolutely nothing. The whole operation is in our mind. We say we make things in construction. But we never do. We merely combine.

But before concluding this article, there is one aspect of power that deserves at least a passing notice. Man is more powerful after all than he suspects. He is too modest altogether—he yields too much credit to God and the state, as the givers of all good gifts and the doers of all great deeds. It is not God but men that are the creators of this world. If it were not for men, there would be, there could be, no God, no world, no creation. Nothing could exist independent of man. Things are only as man sees them, and if he were not here to see them, they would have no existence. A picture exists solely on condition that there is some one to make a picture in the first place, and some one to view and appreciate the picture afterward. The whole world, and God with it, is a vision; it is merely man's conception of things. The scene changes as man changes; as his perceptions change, his ideas change.

Notice what a career God himself has had ! After being recognized for centuries as the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, he has now reached a point, at the beginning of the twentieth century, when he is stripped of all the insignia of power, and even his very existence is denied ! Where would God be if there were no men in the world ? He would be nowhere and even his existence would be ignored. Nobody would know anything of his character and history. Nobody would speak of him, for there would be nothing to be said. What could God do, when there was nothing to be done ?—nobody to punish, nobody to threaten, nobody to recompense and none to save ? It would be a sad day indeed for the Almighty if men should be swept from the earth in a body ! There would be some animals left of course, but animals know no God and therefore they worship none. What would God be if there were none to worship him ? What would a king be if he had no subjects ? He would not be a king most certainly.

Man is everything—he is the world itself. There is, there can be, no world outside of man. Great men are not strong ; kings and conquerors are not. No, not they. The feeblest and most insignificant of mortals are true sovereigns. They are the makers of kings and queens and conquerors. The subject himself is the real king, for the king could not exist for a moment without subjects. Men were in this world thousands of years before kings came—and even God and the state are comparatively late discoveries. What a blessed thing it would have been for this world if they had been overlooked entirely !

And this is the conclusion, the corollary, that must follow what has thus far been said on this subject : If there is no such thing as power, there can be no results of power, no cause and effect. Things do not come, they are not caused ; they are, and they always have been. We say a man would have died if he had not taken the medicine. How should we ever ascertain that fact ? He did take the medicine and he recovered—that is all. There is no “ if ” about the matter. The power of medicine can never be learned. The idea of cause and effect always involves absurdities. Causes must always precede effects, and effects must follow causes. And yet a cause is not a cause till it has produced an effect.

But we are constantly hearing people tell of what this thing has done and that man has accomplished, as if men or things alone were capable of achieving something ! There never has been such a case known in all history, we venture to say, and to make such assertions is nonsense in the sublimated form.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### WRITTEN LAWS.

Written law in its best form is merely an expression of somebody's wishes or opinions, something supposed to be endorsed by the majority of the people at the time of its publication. Such laws originally came out in the form of decrees from the king, or his minister, or, as in Rome, from the praetor. There is no essential difference between a written law, a decree and an ordinance. They are all equally arbitrary rules established with a view to meeting some emergency or carrying out some proposed plan. Laws are not made to enunciate principles, since nothing is added to principles by enunciating them. They do not need enunciating. Laws have absolutely nothing to do with principles. They are merely formed and contrived by the ruling power at the time (often a mere party boss) to carry out some scheme that he has concocted. It cannot be too well borne in mind that laws are this and nothing more. It is rare that they are intended for the good of the people; as a rule their effect is to benefit a few of the people at the expense of the remainder. Sometimes laws indicate the prevailing opinion, the fashion, the mode of the day. Many laws are endorsed by the masses, without much reflection, simply because they are laws, and not because they are believed to be right. Some people imagine that after a law is enacted all that remains for the public is to obey it. But that is a mistake, a misapprehension. There is nothing peculiar about a written law; it is no better than any other piece of writing. It merely indicates, as we have said, somebody's wishes or opinions. No doubt the successor in office will have different wishes and different opinions, and therefore he will issue a different ordinance. Thus it goes.

Law is a matter of men. The laws of Rome were not made

by the people in fact, but by the praetor, the emperor, the one who for the time being was at the head of affairs. All laws are practically edicts or decrees, and no law can be anything more. Edicts are always from one man—sometimes Cæsar, sometimes Charlemagne, sometimes Napoleon, and sometimes Tom Platt. No, law is really one of the simplest things in the world.

It is a mistake to suppose that men are governed in their actions by laws. In the first place laws apply to only a small portion of the affairs of life. Again, only a few people—the poor, the weak, the unsophisticated—have any desire or purpose to obey laws. Many people do not know what the laws are, and others do not care. Most people do as they please irrespective of law, and they are willing to take their chances in the case as they happen to come. As a matter of fact not one man in a thousand pretends to obey the laws in all cases. Must a man consult the statute books and the court decisions before he comes to a conclusion as to what step he had better take? No sensible man thinks of going to that trouble. If he did consult the books and the lawyers, he would probably not be much wiser. If he risks a lawsuit, he even then does not ascertain what the law is. He merely learns who beats and how much it costs to obtain what is denominated “justice.”

What are laws for? Simply to frighten people or punish them; or in some way to get some people to do what other people want them to do. Laws really settle nothing—they are mere instruments in the hands of ambitious, selfish and unscrupulous men. They are supposed to protect people. But only to a limited extent do they do so. They favor some and oppress others. When some one succeeds in a lawsuit, there is always some one who fails. What is one man's gain is another man's loss, in law as well as in war. Laws, at least at the present day, do not determine what is right or just. They have nothing to do with right, except to give what is wrong a semblance of right for the time being. It is well known to everybody that right is one thing, even according to the opinions of the masses, and the law as made by our masters is something quite different.

The government justifies itself by pretending to go according to law in all cases. That it can well afford to do, for it makes the laws as it wants them in the first place. With the public the case is quite different, for they have absolutely nothing to say about making laws. They send representatives, it is true, but as a rule these representatives do not represent their constituents but themselves. The government not only makes its own laws, but executes them, and that is a very important matter. In fact the whole operation of the law depends upon



how and in what spirit it is executed. *Here the government has everything in its own hands.* It can nullify or ignore a law, or so modify it as to give it ten times the force it was intended to have. In executing a law the officers follow chiefly their own wills, as everything is left to their discretion or desires. How far is a policeman controlled by law in his treatment of a prisoner? He makes his own laws to fit his own inclinations and he acts accordingly. The work of legislators, courts and court officers, as well as all executive officers, is almost wholly independent of law. They consult the boss, and care little about the law.

It is well known that in practice written laws are comparatively valueless, so far as controlling the conduct of men is concerned. We have laws against crimes in abundance, and still crimes go on increasing to an alarming extent. As the people do not make the laws, and as they have little interest in seeing them enforced, they give them very little attention. People obey the law only when they are watched, especially if it is obnoxious. But it is possible to watch only a few people, and so as a rule men do as they please regardless of law. Laws should be so shaped and so worded that they have the approval of the people, and then there would be no need of watching them. The only government, as we have often said, that is at all efficacious and satisfactory is self-government.

As a matter of right, there should be no rules or laws. Laws can never apply justly in two cases, for no two cases are alike. It is clear that a law which applies in one case cannot without change be made to apply justly in a different case. Rules of all kinds hamper, embarrass, and obstruct the action of men. Actions at all times should be governed not by arbitrary rules, but by reason and judgment. Let people be free to act as seems to them fit and proper, according to the circumstances of each particular case. In the East everything follows rules, custom, precedent. If a man paints, he must paint in a certain manner, and if he carves he must follow rules, even though he knows they spoil the figure. To a mosque there must be so many domes and no more. Such rules fetter genius and result in no good whatever. It is time to banish conventionalism, and let the human soul be free once more.

In practice, how do laws operate? Do they relieve or protect the people? A law that assumes to protect everybody protects nobody. Universal protection is, like universal love, a myth. In practice a few get protection and favors, while the majority are neglected and are left to endure their sufferings as best they can. How was it with the coal strike of 1902? Did the laws in that case protect the people? No, the laws in that

case protected the operators quite a little, and the miners also to a certain extent; but the people were compelled to bear the whole burden and take care of themselves. That is the kind of protection that law is always sure to afford. Somebody must suffer grievously in every case; somebody must get along without protection. Protection, like riches and luxuries of all kinds, is for the few—always for the few.

Strange laws are laid down for us in some cases. We must not only obey our masters, but we must love them. That is really a very hard condition! To love those who hate us, who oppress us, and who do us continued injustice—that is one case which the law cannot reach. We may be commanded, but we cannot love our masters, at least not such masters as we have at the present day. Shall we love a parent that treats us with great harshness and injustice! Shall we love him who condemns us to an eternity in hell, simply because in our ignorance we may have done what did not please our master? No, we could not love such a master, even though he were God himself.

A man in civilized life is supposed to obey the laws. But he never knows the laws—at least he never knows more than a few of them. Laws are made much faster than people can read them—to say nothing of committing them to memory. A man seldom is aware that he has disobeyed the law till he finds that he has incurred a penalty. And yet every man is supposed to know the law! What a farce and what a fraud! Lawyers and judges are excused for not knowing the law, but the common people never! Isn't that strange?

Laws are not enacted and published with a view to having them read or understood. No laws, not even those contained in the Bible, are made for that purpose. Laws as a rule are made to mystify the facts and leave the people in doubt. They mean anything or nothing, and they are to be observed or not observed according to circumstances. All laws, like all religions, are mysteries, and they were originally intended to be such. The turn which these laws are made to take when they are applied to the affairs of men, depends entirely upon the interpreter, the judge, the one who is supposed to be in authority for the time being. Laws, as everybody knows, are not devised to tell people what to do or what to leave undone, but to give a man's enemies an opportunity or an excuse for persecuting or tormenting him. They are always mysterious in their form of expression, and they can be read any way that a person likes, either backward or forward. Laws are generally excuses or expedients permitting the wicked to perpetrate their crimes and escape without injury. Laws are always vague and incomprehensible. They are in effect tricks or

schemes devised for the purpose of deceiving or overreaching the common people.

People as a matter of fact always do as they please without any reference to law, and they take the consequences as they happen to come. Sometimes they are punished for their wrong doing, and sometimes they are not molested; and even when they are punished they consider that their gains equal their losses. The Bible is full of laws, and our statute books are also full of laws, but what effect do they have? Who obeys them? Those who choose to obey them, and not others. There is no more compulsion about a man's obeying a statute law than there is about obeying a moral law. People always do about such matters as they feel or as they are inclined. It is men, not law, that interfere with people and cause them trouble—it is the constables, the sheriff, the police, the executioner who make all the disturbance. And even they do as they choose. Their action is governed not by law but by their own wills in all cases. No, people should at once get rid of the absurd notion that because a law has been enacted it must and will be obeyed.

There is no question but that the greatest good that could happen to this or any other civilized country would be the abrogation or repeal of every written law now found on its statute books. It is a serious mistake to suppose that men must be governed by written formulas or precepts, or that they are so governed now. Men are governed in their actions by the feelings and opinions of the people among whom they live. Public opinion makes laws; it also unmakes them. A law against the feelings of the large portion of a community cannot be enforced. This is the reason why so many laws are enacted and so few enforced. No, men can be and should be allowed to govern themselves without laws and without restraint from any source. We do not even need the laws laid down in the Bible. Already we have nullified nearly all of those ordinances to a greater or less extent.

The strongest of all laws is community law. Such laws are obeyed because they are approved. They come from the people and speak the sentiments of the people,—such as the laws of fashion, laws of morality, laws of honor. No one cares to defy or offend the community in which he lives. It is not so with written or statute laws. In such laws the people have no great interest; they are not of their making, they themselves have not been consulted, and generally these laws are against their wishes and sentiments. How should they have any concern in the enforcement of such laws as these?

At present law is used principally as an engine to promote

rascality. Highwaymen hold up the unsuspecting traveler with a pistol in hand. In a similar way lawyers hold up innocent victims by threats of a lawsuit—blackmail as it is sometimes called. The woods are full of blackmailers.

Security to society through the law ! That is very vague indeed. How shall we decide what is security for society, or when it is fully secured and when it is not ? No two men agree on this question—in these cases the strongest decides as usual. But most men want no security, or they would rather get it in some less expensive way than through the medium of state authority.

No, laws are made for an entirely different object than the security of society. Society, if secured, must always secure itself—neither the law nor the government can do anything effective in that direction. The government can make trouble and add to the burdens of individuals, but really it can do nothing beyond that.

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE POLICY OF GOVERNMENT.

How did government by men ever originate, and how did it finally grow into a custom ? Things were not always so ; they are not necessarily so to-day. The only government that men need, or that they can make use of, is self-government. We have government because some men want to live at the expense of others ; they want to cast their burdens upon the shoulders of weaker people. Thus it has been always. The desire of some men to rule others is the cause, but fear on the part of the weak is the instrument through which success in this direction is rendered possible. Men surrender to others for protection ; they feel feeble and timid and they are willing to put themselves wholly into the power of some new party in order to escape the danger of falling into the hands of another party which they dread more. But in nine cases out of ten they do not better their condition in the least. Men originally congregated in towns and cities solely because they were afraid ; and in cities may be found the chief cause of the fall of man as a free citizen. Through cities the world has been enslaved. If we had had no cities, we should have had no nation, no government as we have to-day. In cities the power of the nation



is concentrated. It is well known that Paris is France, London is England, Berlin is Germany and St. Petersburg is Russia. Without Rome, the city of Rome, the Roman empire could never have existed.

What a farce it is to speak of such a thing as self-government, as if there were anything of the kind to be found anywhere! Does a republic furnish us with an example of people who govern themselves? Most assuredly not. There can be no such thing as self-government. A man either has or has not masters. If he has masters, he is not self-governed; and if he has no masters, he is not governed at all. What gives rise to the delusion that people in republics are self-governed is the fact that they are supposed to choose their own rulers. But a man is none the less our sovereign, and we are none the less governed because we have had a choice between masters. People in republics are supposed to make their own laws, but this is unquestionably a fiction. As a matter of fact the masses have nothing to do with making laws in any country. Finally, there is just as much government, in practice, in a democracy as there is under a monarchy, and often there is more.

All government is, in practice, legalized robbery in its most unmistakable form. The conception that government is for the people is a childish delusion that will not bear close inspection for one moment. Government is for those who are on the inside, and for those only. Every man who takes the trouble to obtain an office, does so simply with a view to secure what he imagines there is in it. There was a time when officers and representatives were chosen by the people, but that is a practice that was long since discontinued. The practice as it exists now is for a man first to contrive in some way to have himself nominated and then trust to money and good fortune to bring about his election. As soon as he is in power, he devotes all his efforts toward rendering that power continuous. If he is elected for this year, he wants to remain in his position next year and the year after. That is the chief mission of every man who is chosen to represent the people in any capacity. The first effort of the highwayman when he overpowers his victim is to bind and gag him, so as to render him powerless. Does not the state bind and gag its victims in a very similar manner? Is that not the main purpose of the laws in the first place? Is the citizen ever allowed to defend himself against his government? Most assuredly not. Resistance against the state is rebellion, and sometimes it is treason. Great care is taken that no citizen shall have at his command the means of defending himself against the government, even if he were so disposed.

Those who doubt that the main business of the officers of the government is robbing the people, cannot have a true understanding of what a modern state is. What is robbery but taking the money from a defenceless victim by force? And how is money ever extorted from the people in the form of taxes except by a show of force? How many people would pay the taxes imposed upon them if there were no jails or prisons and no military force at command? No man pays taxes because he believes it is just to do so, or because he loves that kind of amusement. He pays because he feels that he *must*. Who wishes to pay taxes that others have unnecessarily imposed upon him? Who wants to pay bills that benefit other people and bring harm to himself? How many people derive any appreciable benefit from the taxes that they are compelled to pay annually? How many of them are consulted as to the amount they can pay or that they wish to pay, or as to the time when they can pay it? People who are obliged to pay tribute are never consulted on such matters. They are expected to hold themselves in readiness to pay when the tax-gatherer arrives, and to pay what is demanded.

The state has become an insatiable monster that is constantly devouring its own children; or, what amounts to the same thing, constantly taking from them that by which they might be nourished and supported. As the practice is to-day, not a law is passed, we venture to say, by any legislature unless there is some purpose, either patent or concealed, to extort money from the public in order to enrich a few favorites of the party boss. The main business of every legislator is not to protect the people, but to grind axes for those who are so fortunate as to be on the inside. In this sense, every public officer is an enemy of the people. He certainly lives at the expense of the people and gives to them little or nothing in return. Nothing can be imagined that is more oppressive than state rule. Even Feudalism that lasted a thousand years was far better, far more just to the masses. Gaulier was right when he called the state "a fictitious entity, an abstract conception of the brain." It is comparatively a modern discovery, and a wonderful contrivance it is. Nothing like it was known in ancient times. Men were robbed and compelled to sacrifice in other days, but not as now with their own consent. But at this time men will consent to be robbed every day, by the state, and then will go around singing "glory," "hallelujah," and lauding their government as "the best that the world has ever known." People used to sing praises to God in the same way, but now they ignore God and worship the state.

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What governs a man's conduct in life? Not what is taught in his Bible, not what the state orders or directs, but what he believes to be right or necessary, or at least to be calculated to promote his interest. That and that alone governs a man's actions. What a man does is a matter wholly between himself and himself. Change a man's belief, and you change his whole life and being. In no other way can such a result be achieved. Codes never make a man better—they do not govern his conduct, except perhaps in a few particulars. Our Bible is full of rules and commands that nobody observes. After all, as we have said, the only real master that any man can have is himself. No matter how powerful his oppressor may be, he himself can be free any moment if he wills. His master might kill him, but he could not take his freedom from him. He could not compel him to obey. People who are not afraid of dying or of being injured may always be free.

One of the fictions of government is that the state is continuous and never dies; that courts are continuous, that rulers are continuous. The people of Thibet think the Grand Lama never dies, and yet he does nevertheless. The people are deceived by *hocus pocus*, and when the lama dies, as all lamas do eventually, his place is taken by a supposititious lama, who is not a lama at all till he is consecrated and made a lama. The principle is the same—the forms alone being different—in all governments. Every ruler must be continuous, or he cannot be legitimate. So village and city boards are supposed to be continuous, but in reality every time a man goes out and a new man comes in, it is properly speaking a new board. As a matter of fact no man succeeds another man; he has nothing at all to do with his predecessor any more than he would if the predecessor had never existed. Lincoln's administration had no more to do with Jackson's administration than it would have had if these men had been presidents of different republics. Italy of to-day has nothing to do with Rome of two thousand years ago. There is no continuity anywhere. A journey from Buffalo to Albany is not continuous. It is one step at a time, and every step complete in itself and independent of all other steps.

It is amusing to see how delighted people are with being governed, with being disciplined from day to day by their several masters! They consider that government is eminently proper and necessary—the world could not exist a minute, they imagine, without government. How much interest they take in their chains! They are so beautiful, so finely burnished, so handsomely gilded! And they render such a pleasing, jingling sound when they are toyed with or handled. People like to live

in a prison—if it is a nice prison, handsomely furnished and conveniently arranged, as government prisons are usually. People under modern governments have so many luxuries, so many comforts! Who would not be one of the slaves of government, one of the subjects, under such favorable circumstances? People really forget that they are slaves, that they are living in a state of confinement in which there are many duties combined with a few privileges. People love to look around and see how much better housed and served they are than people are who live in heathen lands. They see so many palaces and such splendor all over their country that their eyes are dazzled. They do not own the palaces, and the splendor they behold is not their splendor, but all these things belong to their country and they have the pleasure of feeling that it was their money or their labor that helped to pay for these blessings. They have some pains and some inconveniences, it is true, but they feel that this is no more than might be expected. Indeed, things have always been so. It is known that they dare not express their thoughts, but as they do not have many, they do not feel at all hampered. They think that people ought to be willing to make some sacrifices when they have such a kind government to protect and care for them.

The masters that we usually obey, and those that we most dread, are those that we do not know and that we have never seen. Indeed, we are not even sure that they exist. We dread God above all, and we are ready to do something to appease him at all times. So we dread the state, and yet we have never seen the state and we do not know where or what is the state. All we have seen in this direction is those who oppress and harass us continually in the name of the state, just as there are those who oppress us in the name of God. God we never see, and the state we never see—even of their actual, practical existence we are uncertain. Perhaps when the curtain is raised finally we shall find that there never was anything behind it.

We pay great respect to a policeman, as people formerly did to priests, so long as he is a public officer, but when his blue coat and brass buttons are removed and he becomes a mere citizen once more, we give him no more heed than we would to any ordinary man. After his club is laid down and his coat removed, we would resist him like men, if he should attempt to exercise authority over us. But we ought to get rid of all such spooks as the "power of government" and the "will of the people" and deal with things as we actually find them. This representation business is all bosh. There are no real representatives either of God or the people. We are always dealing with men—most



ordinary, common men, and we should treat them accordingly.

It is clear that the state binds, but cannot be bound. The state, the king, has no duties, no responsibility, and he acknowledges no obligations whatever. The master owes nothing to his slave; the slave owes everything to his master. In feudal times there was reciprocity, but then there was no true mastership, no true slavery. In those days people believed in a God. The lord and the vassal both had their obligations and each had his rights. As we have often said, a slave has absolutely no rights. What we have now is comparatively a new condition of things. The state properly so called dates back only two hundred years, and the idea of a real city only to the thirteenth century.

Government originally was merely the contrivance of designing men. There is not a word to be said in its behalf, any more than there is in favor of wickedness and crime in general. Seen fairly and in its true light, government is an unsightly monster. The government prospers solely through the sufferings and sacrifices of those whose business it is to support the government. Every nation thus far known to history has been founded upon the corpses of those who went down in battle. Government has no means of manifesting itself except through force. It revels in blood, and the groans of the dying are music in its ears.

In every government, no matter how constituted, there are two parties, and only two, namely, the governed and the governors. The fiction is nourished that there is some imaginary existence called government that is different from either the governors or the governed, but that is simply a delusion. Government is exclusively a matter of men—always ordinary men. The interests of these two parties are diametrically opposed to each other at all times. They are antagonistic. One produces and the other consumes, the producer in this case being always the producer, and the consumer being always the consumer. They never for a moment change places. Again, it must be observed that government is always usurpation. There is no divine right to authority—that is a fraudulent pretense. In its very mildest form, also, government is uniformly tyranny. Government is a cancer, an excrescence, an abnormal growth that enlarges at the expense of the subject and destroys him at last. The end of all government is annihilation. There is no alternative, no middle ground, no avenue of escape. What has been will be, and those who read history know very well what has been.

The loudest and most alarming of all complaints uttered by mankind at the present day are those made by people who, with-

out any fault of their own and with no prospect of improvement hereafter, *are being robbed of their birthright*. They cannot get what they earn; they labor unceasingly for other people, for those who call themselves their masters and who treat them as slaves. This is what will make trouble some day throughout the world. When the time comes that people see for themselves and understand things as they really are, they are sure, like Samson, to pull down the pillars of the temple, though they lose their lives in the collapse that follows. There will be at least one satisfaction—the temple will be destroyed and its restoration thereafter will be something quite impossible. The creeds and theories of the present day are all wrong, and they are the source of most of our sorrows. To our creeds we owe a great share of our burdens.

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## CHAPTER XXV.

### PROTECTION AND ITS FALLACIES.

Protection is for slaves, or for those who assume the character and play the part of slaves. An honest, independent, manly man never wants protection. He can take care of himself, and therefore he asks no help from any source. Knaves and designing men often demand protection. But they merely pretend to be what they are not, weaklings, people who could not subsist without aid from others. This is a scheme, a fraud, a trick, that is being constantly played under all governments. Men call for protection simply because they imagine that the world owes them a living and they will have it. In other words, they are determined to live upon what other people have accumulated. As for themselves, they refuse to work; and like drones in the hive, they seek to live upon the earnings of other people. That is the mystery, the true inwardness of protection the world over. There is always a design back of every scheme of protection.

Protection is something that cannot rightfully be demanded from any one by another. Protection is a piece of favoritism; it is like a gift, it may be granted or not as a man chooses. There is no obligation to protect, as there is no obligation to give.

Protection has largely, if not wholly, the characteristics of giving. It is always one-sided, and therefore always unjust.

When we protect some, we oppose others, or at least we leave others unassisted. Gifts are always partial, and for that reason unjust. To be just, we should give to all. There should be no favoritism. So there should be no protection, which is always favoritism in its most offensive form. If we protected all, we would protect none, for the very essence of protection is that a few should be protected, favored, at the expense and the disadvantage of the many who are not protected. Nothing could be more heinous, more outrageous, than such protection. It is injustice in its most aggravated form.

Protection is one of the forms of sacrifice that prevails under governments of all kinds. Protection is always for the few and at the expense of the many. Protection, no matter in what shape or under what conditions, always costs something; somebody must pay for it, and somebody must sacrifice so that he can pay for it. Again we say, protection and sacrifice always go together. It is just so in giving. Giving is always a sacrifice—it is always at somebody's expense. But why should anybody give, why should anybody protect? There is no reason for such action, and certainly not any justification for such a demand. Why is not the giver as worthy and deserving as the one who receives? Why is not the protector as deserving of favors as the one who is protected?

As a rule, a man who asks to protect you, should be regarded as a suspicious or dangerous person. Any man is dangerous to you when you are once placed in his power. People generally want to help those who are helpless, powerless; they never want to help those who do not need or ask for help. They help those who are beneath them and whom they can use as their instruments. Generally men aid or protect no others. A man who aids and protects people out of pure goodness of heart, and without any ulterior motive, is an idiot. But even an idiot usually has some motive, as he has some intelligence. Of course if he had no intelligence, he would be like a stick or a stone, and he would have no motive.

Does the government have no motive when it protects people? Most assuredly it has a motive, a base motive, in all cases. The government likes to protect people, in order to keep them in a helpless condition. If every man were a real man, we should need no government and should have no government. We have government as it is because the majority of men are mere reeds shaken by the wind. They have minds, in the rudimentary form, but they have always depended upon the mind of the government, and they are content to continue in that helpless condition indefinitely.

But does the government really protect people? Does it protect all people, and does it protect them at all times? Most assuredly it does not, and those who really believe that the government protects all people, or even most people, or any people to any great extent, are laboring under a misapprehension of facts. They are sadly mistaken. It is only a pretence on the part of government, it is an empty promise to induce people to pay their tribute cheerfully and without delay. How long would government last, if people should happen to get the idea into their heads that they could get along without the aid and protection of their rulers? Not long—that much is certain. We have had government protection in this country for considerably over a century. We have it in great plenty to-day, and yet men are murdered and robbed as they never have been before; some are killed by a trolley car, some by an automobile, some by a bicycle, some by a steam engine, and some by robbers at midnight. What good does government protection do? It is just like a man's having his life insured, expecting by doing so that he will never die. Men do die, whether they are insured or not; and so men do die, whether they are protected or not. However, there is this striking difference between the two cases. If a man is insured in a sound company, his family get some money after his death. But how much does any man get from his government when he happens to be robbed or killed in some way unfortunately? Not one cent! What would you say of a man who should presume and pretend so much and really perform so little as the government does regularly? You would call him a fraud and turn away from him in disgust. But then there remains this miserable delusion that we could not get along without the government! Poor things that believe thus—they are indeed to be pitied?

The government is constantly taking our money under the fraudulent pretence that it protects people. We have seen how it fails in the effort, and we may add that it never does anything of the kind. What does it do with the money that it takes from the people annually, and sometimes semi-annually? Why it keeps it and puts it in the bank or uses it. Surely the taxpayer never sees a cent of his money after it leaves his hands. If there happens to be a surplus, the taxpayer never sees a penny of it. *It always goes to some one but himself.* If he is robbed, if he loses a horse or a child, if his house is burned down, if he is dying from consumption or from heart disease, what does the government do for him? What does it care? Nothing, absolutely nothing! The government is master, and masters never have duties or



obligations. It is the slave only that has duties and obligations : it is the slave only that pays tribute and suffers.

We object to free lunches, free rides, free shows, free schools, free libraries and free books for the multitude, just as we do to protection under any conditions. There never was anything free that was not, or must not be, paid for by somebody. Free schools cost just as much as other schools, nay more, because people do not care how large the bills may be, if somebody else has to pay them. And so it is with free libraries, and everything else that is free. *It is free for some, at the expense of others*, and everything of this kind is monstrously unfair and unjust. Every man should pay his own bills, and he should be compelled or called upon to pay no others. There is too much of this casting one man's burden upon the shoulders of another man, in this country. It is wrong, palpably, positively wrong. Our scheme is to get some people to pay the debts that other people have contracted. That is what is called business at the present day. If a man has not the money, he knows where he can borrow it or get trusted—and that, he thinks, is a great deal better than to undertake to earn the money in the old honest way. At the present time, borrowing has become a craze. People borrow and nations borrow—*money that they never expect to pay*. Indeed, the lender does not want to be paid. He merely wants his interest regularly, and the higher that is, the better he likes it. He is not concerned about the principal. Knaves take advantage of this opportunity, and many a borrower goes into bankruptcy. Nothing could be more vicious or unsound than such a system, and disaster is sure to come in the end. But every man imagines that he himself will escape, while all the rest go under. Thus it is that the wicked work goes on.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### SELF-DEFENCE AND NECESSITY.

It is an alarming state of things when we must kill somebody in order to either protect ourselves or save our property—there is something radically wrong in such a selfish and cruel doctrine as that. We say it was necessary, and we were afraid! No doubt we were afraid, for there are more cowards abroad in civilized life than people usually imagine. But suppose a man is a coward and is afraid, does that justify him in shooting the first man who crosses his path, particularly if it is done on his premises and in the night time?

Who shall decide what is necessary and what is not? A man may be a good judge of his own conduct, but has he any right to pass opinion upon the conduct of other men? Where could he possibly secure such a right? Because we are in danger, or we think we are, or we pretend that we think so, does that justify us in taking the law into our own hands and removing every one whom we consider unfriendly or dangerous? There is something wrong in such a proposition, popular and unquestioned though it may be at the present time. But that is what all nations are ready to do, on occasion, in their intercourse with other nations; they make a business of killing people, their enemies as they call them, and sometimes their friends, their own people, merely to protect themselves! How cowardly and selfish it is! Great Britain started out to annihilate the Boers, and the United States to annihilate the Filipinos, so that these people might not prove to be troublesome in the future. That was the policy that the United States, a Christian nation, pursued with the Indians—and it succeeded. But how damnably wicked such a policy proved at last! The Devil could make just as good a plea as these nations could, for anything that he ever did. The Devil himself never does anything unless he considers it

necessary. Indeed, he would be a fool if he did. The Devil, by the way, if we may be allowed to judge, is a gentleman compared with some people who call themselves Christians and follow what are called Christian practices in this century. The Devil is a coward—as rascals usually are—and that is the reason why he is always so anxious to *protect* himself.

It is an awful doctrine—it is a crazy man's delusion—that it is necessary to kill, murder and torture people that happen to be in our power, just to protect our own pusillanimous selves and escape without injury. The main source of the villainies perpetrated in this world is found to lie in cowardice and cupidity. Tyrants are cruel because they are timorous and apprehensive, and rascals usually commit crimes for the mere purpose of securing what they know does not belong to them.

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We are supposed to need God, need a religion, need a master, need government, need a state, need society and culture, need sin. But Heaven knows we do not really need any one of these things. On the contrary, they all need us, and they could not get along without us. Without us, society would be something entirely different from what it is now. We could go on and on indefinitely without the so-called blessings of civilization. As we get older, it is less and less that we care for society, and it is less and less that society can do for us; as a child we needed society, because we were helpless, but as we get older, we find that we are able to help ourselves.

Are men our only companions? Are there no birds and beasts? Did not Robinson Crusoe live alone, without a white man? He may have been lonely, but he lived. So did Boone, and so did many others. No, society needs us more than we need society. Were it not for ourself and yourself, and the rest, whence would the tribute come? How would men get rich, and whence would the spoils come? We might need a companion or two. But is that society? There are various kinds of society. We may have companions, but must we have masters and government? Instead of having a master, why might not we be a master? That would be better. Really, government, with masters, is a late development, a result, a sort of achievement of man. It is not a natural production. Animals have no government. Among them, every individual does as he chooses, or what he can, so long as he lets others alone.

People get a great many impressions gratuitously. In other words, they dream. They imagine things are so; they hear peo-

ple say they are so, and after a while the conviction becomes established in their minds that things really are so. On no better foundation than this are most of the impressions of mankind usually based.

For a long time people believed in witches; they still believe in spirits that wander about. They also believe in necessity, in fate, in luck, in Providence, and all such agencies as these. But where is the evidence? We are not aware that there is any proof in that direction; there may be some, but we have never as yet discovered it. If things are fated, if will, purpose, planning and thought amount to nothing, or if they do not exist, why should people bother to make the effort to think or plan? If things must be, we may as well sit down and wait till they happen to come along. We should then be like clay in the potter's hands, with our whole destiny shaped by fate.

And yet, unquestionably, our life is made up wholly of efforts of ours, of choice, of will and resolutions on our part. Our temperament or character has undoubtedly much to do with our career in life, but if we had nothing but character, what would our life amount to? How could we ever accomplish anything? What we are fated to do, compelled to do, we cannot be said to do ourselves. It is only because men have will, thought, choice, and determination that anything is ever done. We move not because it is fated, but because we are impelled or incited to move—which would never happen if we did not think or will. The doctrine of fatality might answer in oriental countries where men are content to be slaves, but not in occidental countries where people are expected to do something at least on their own account.

It is a very unfortunate state of mind for anybody to fall into when he imagines that things are necessary and unavoidable, that suffering is necessary, that sorrow is necessary, that crime is necessary, that despotism is necessary, or that wrong in any form is necessary. Necessity is the argument of knaves and despots, and sometimes it is the conclusion arrived at by fools. Tyrants are always preaching to subjects the necessity of submission! And how beautifully and successfully the argument works, and how it has worked for some thousands of years! People submit and crawl in the dust because they imagine that it is good for their digestion, and besides that it is absolutely necessary! What would fools do if they did not have a master to advise and direct them? It is very kind in God—or whoever it is that attends to such matters—to furnish fools with a king. *Fools and kings always go together.* They are complements of each other and one could not exist without the other under



any circumstances. If men, even a majority of them, were sensible, considerate, thoughtful and brave men, as they should be, kings would soon run out of business and such a thing as government would be unknown.

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## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

The rights of man are very good things for people to think of and talk about, but what is chiefly to be regretted is that such an important subject should have received for thousands of years past so very little attention from the great masses of mankind. Instead of thinking for ourselves and investigating on our own account, we have been trusting to what such people as Aristotle and Plato said on this matter, two or three thousand years ago; or to what the Fathers said, or what the Bible said, a code of laws, or a collection of decrees, prepared many centuries since and sent out from time to time in stray fragments for confiding people to read. The fact is that the best judge of right or wrong, or of the justice or injustice of a man's action, is the man himself. Indeed, who else could be the proper judge of his conduct, his motives, and all the circumstances controlling his action? Who is so wise, so learned, so astute, as to presume to lay down the law which other men must obey? Any rational being would say that there is and there can be no such man. And yet strange to say, we have now worn our collar so long, and we have become so accustomed to the clanking of our chains, that we never take even the simplest step without first considering or inquiring whether it is lawful or not, or whether it is prudent to do so or not! The only question that gives special concern is, how far will our chains permit us to go? Time-serving idiots and cowards as we all are! We require to be continually propped up by authority, by custom, by fashion, by public opinion, and a score of other spooks that we talk much about but of which we know very little. A bold, brave, manly man who dares to shake off all these chains of authority, all his prejudices, his whims and his false notions of every kind—where do you find him? We have never seen one; we have never seen anybody that had seen one. We can find thousands, tens of thousands, nay millions of men that can tell to a nicety what others ought to do, what

others ought to say, what others ought to contribute, what others ought to believe, but of those who can tell what they themselves ought to do, or say, or contribute, or believe—not a single one! What kind of a world is this that we are living in; or rather, what kind of people are those who are found here at the present time?

The people of the present age have strange notions of their rights, duties, missions and functions. There is Dr. Abbott, for example. He thinks the Filipinos ought to be evangelized, and that the United States government ought to have the job. It is his opinion that barbarism has no rights that civilization is bound to respect. He considers it to be the function of the Anglo-Saxon race to confer the gifts of civilization, through law, on the uncivilized peoples of the earth. There is nothing new about this outrageous doctrine—we have heard of it before. When nations get their eyes upon certain prey, and are bound to have it cost what it will, a trumped-up excuse for the contemplated crimes is just as good as any. "Shall we," Dr. Abbott is quoted as saying, "leave races just emerging from childhood to acquire capacity for self-government through the long and dismal processes of self-government; or shall we serve as their guardians and tutors, protecting their rights, &c?" What a ridiculous pretense this is! Who commissioned the Americans to be the conquerors, or the guardians and tutors, of the Filipinos, or of any other race? Have not the Filipinos just as good a right to become the guardians and tutors of the American people? They certainly would have, as far as rights go, if they had the largest and most powerful armies. All the right there is in the case lies in the comparative strength of armies.

Talk about our functions! Napoleon had his functions, and Alexander had his before Napoleon came. Caesar, Sulla, Nero, Caligula, Charlemagne, Captain Kidd and Jesse James all had their functions! Every murderer and rascal that this world has yet produced has had his functions—that is, he had his excuses for the wicked lines of policy which he decided to pursue.

How is it that men lose their liberty and become slaves in civilized life? As a rule this loss is a result of their own shortcomings, their indolence, their supineness, their recklessness, their pride, their avarice and their fondness for display. They begin by conceding a little to those whom they accept as their representatives, and it is a short and easy route after that. These benefactors are soon transformed into masters and oppressors—so it always is and must be. It is dangerous to give gifts, and still more dangerous to accept favors. Where little is given at first, much is demanded shortly after. So it is and has

been in all the processes and transformations of government in the past. We begin by entrusting our business to others and putting ourselves in their power,—the most dangerous innovation that was ever permitted by man. The only safe rule in this world, is to deal with everybody courteously but cautiously, and to keep him always at arms-length. So far as practicable in daily life, trust nobody, make no promises or contracts, and assume no obligations of any kind. Thus and thus only can you continue to be your own master.

The growth of power and the increase of despotism has come from the same source in all countries and at all times—it always comes from small beginnings and from harmless concessions made at first. Usually something is done from a sense of duty, in nine cases out of ten something to please the Lord, and we make some man our agent or representative. We come to look upon him as our benefactor. This man in the course of time becomes our master, our governor, our king. Ten thousand times this bit of history has been repeated in the past of this world—first a servant, then an agent, then a representative, then a protector, and finally a monarch or master.

And then people are so proud of masters! They regard them as *their* masters, and the splendor that they behold about them as *their* splendor. It is all theirs—their palaces, their army, their exploits, their renown. Well, these things do belong to the people, and they might well be proud of them, for they pay for them with their own toil and with their own life-blood. Unfortunately people can become accustomed, and finally indifferent, to anything, even to a despotism. People who are born under a despotism cannot conceive of any better condition of affairs than that which they find in their own country. That is the advantage that tyrants always have. People never like a change and so they are content to go on and suffer indefinitely.

Unconsciously and inadvertently our people are losing a little more of their liberties every day. So it always has been, and doubtless so it ever will be. Such transitions in the fortunes of people do not come in a day. The change goes on slowly, imperceptibly. What intelligent men should attend to first and above all things, is questions of government and state policy. But as a matter of fact they give such subjects no attention at all. They have other things more important; they want to make money and seek pleasure. In the meantime it is the office-holders who run the government, and usually for their own personal advancement. Our people take nothing seriously; they are not of a serious turn. It is very interesting indeed to notice how a republic develops into an empire, as it uniformly does if

sufficient time is allowed. We have an object lesson in America to-day. Governments always begin with democracy and end with despotism.

There can be no true progress in any country without liberty. There may be a display, a semblance of advancement, but it will be found on close examination to be simply an imitation of the genuine article, a semblance of what might properly be called progress. In order to advance, people must think—it is the only condition on which progress is possible—and if people think, they must be allowed full liberty to express their thoughts. Under a despotism, and while the people are held down in a state of bondage, no one flourishes but the king and his courtiers, and even they flourish only for a time. Science under a despot always languishes—so does art, so does literature. Above all other men, those who write and speak for the public should be accorded the most complete freedom in their utterances. If they cannot say what they think, there is no good in thinking. Writers and speakers might better be allowed occasionally to say something amiss than to be hushed entirely and not permitted to say anything at all.

If we wish for illustrations of the truth of the position that we are taking, we have only to refer to French history during the last two or three hundred years. There was the case of Louis XIV., for instance, the most renowned of all the legitimate monarchs of France. Nothing could surpass the splendor of his reign, but he left a nation of paupers and mendicants to rejoice at his final departure. There was splendor indeed at the court, but misery and wretchedness everywhere else. That is the penalty that people always pay for having a powerful government. As Buckle well says, under Louis XIV., "There was no popular liberty ; there were no great men ; there was no science ; there was no literature ; there were no arts. France had succumbed and was laid prostrate."

No, let it never be forgotten that under a despotic ruler truth is always suppressed, and in this suppression we shall find the origin of rebellion. France had the most frightful revolution ever known in modern times, simply because the people had been kept in subjection till endurance was no longer possible. Even slaves will rebel at last. Unfortunately history has a habit of repeating itself, and fashions return after they have been forgotten for many long years. So it is with great events in history.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### THE GOOD OF THE PUBLIC.

The world will never know precisely how much crime and wickedness has been perpetrated in the name of "public good." But the whole thing is a delusion, if not a fraud. There is not, and there never has been, such a thing as "public good;" that is, there never has been such a thing as good for all the people, or even for the great body of the people. It will be found in all cases, on close inspection, that when people advocate some measure because it is for the public good, it is really for the good of a few favored ones, at the expense of the remainder. It is impossible that any measure should result in a personal benefit to every individual in a large community. Let us suppose it is a railroad project. A few may have land to sell and they are benefited if the railroad proves to be the purchaser. Others may have freight to carry, or they may expect to be favored in some other way. But others may have their beautiful farms ruined by being cut in two by the new railroad route. And so with towns. Some derive a benefit from the new railroad through an increase of trade; while other towns, differently situated, will find that they lose trade by the proposed change. This is the way it works with every change that is made—the result being a benefit to a few and a loss to many others. Again, we repeat, "public good" is simply a delusion. It is a name applied to something that does not exist.

But public good is something to talk about. It is something that unites people as nothing else will. People will enthuse on that subject who could not possibly be aroused in any other way. The moment you convince a man that some project that is talked about is for the public good it will be sure to command his support. Public good, according to his notions, means his per-

sonal good, as well as the good of everybody else. Who would not endorse such a measure?

It should be borne constantly in mind that there is no public in the first place, no general or comprehensive being or creature independent of the individuals of which the public is composed. There is this man and that man, and a thousand or ten thousand others. But in all cases these are simply individual men just like ourselves—there are, and there can be, no others. So, when we talk about the good of the people and the benefits to be secured by them, we do not mean some imaginary or general being with some mysterious or incomprehensible character, but only a portion of the whole, usually only a very few men. If a law is passed to benefit the public, it will be found in every instance, on careful scrutiny, that it is only a few men, some people with a job or with an axe to grind, who are the ones that expect to reap the benefits. It is impossible that all should be favored; somebody must sacrifice always. That is the penalty that men must pay for belonging to society and being subject to government.

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Let us consider this question of groups or combinations of men known as "the public" still farther. Why is it that bodies of men never do wise things? Why is it that a man while a member of any organized body of men never knows as much as he does while acting entirely on his individual responsibility? This is an interesting problem in psychology. A man who is a member of a group will do foolish things that he would be ashamed to do as an ordinary citizen. One of the reasons for this seems to be that the responsibility is divided, or at least negatived in some way. Each man hides behind his colleagues, and, like the ostrich, he imagines that nobody can see him! The blame, when there is blame, is thrown upon the whole body, and so it does not affect any single individual. That is one of the secrets of this mysterious phenomenon.

But above and beyond this, a man who is simply a member of a body loses his individuality, and with it, to a large extent, his customary intelligence. In other words, for some reason, he really knows less than he did before. Hence bodies of all kinds—towns, cities, states, legislatures, companies and corporations of every name and nature—are the prey of some designing and unscrupulous machinator who is always playing some trick upon lethargic and unsuspecting members and taking them at a disadvantage. The only case where a man is a man at all times

and under all circumstances, is where he stands up and acts entirely upon his own responsibility. The idea that ten men know more than one man is a fatal delusion. Where intellect is required, there is no instance where one man would not do better than a number of men. It all depends upon the caliber or character of the men themselves. One man would go and do the job, while ten men would hesitate and consult. What would become of an army with ten heads?

People are really better as individuals than society as a whole. People are always better than their laws, better than their Bible, better than their government, better than the church to which they belong. When prejudices, fears or self-interest do not intervene, men as individuals are inclined to be fair, kind, just, reasonable and humane. It is natural for men to be so, as it is natural for animals to be so. A man never exhibits his selfishness and his meanness in its complete fullness until he becomes a member of civilized society. What crime would a patriot hesitate to commit if he imagined that through this crime he could benefit his country? What has been the history of the church in the same direction? Does not the end always justify the means? Is there anything that the faithful do that is wrong, if it helps the church?

As a rule a man should keep out of crowds, clubs, societies and associations, because by joining them he loses his identity and he can never act like himself. Men cannot think in crowds, or at least they cannot have full control of their thoughts. Confusion unsettles the minds of men, and contact with others renders a free course of thought impossible. Sound thinking in crowds is simply impracticable. This is the main reason why bodies of men never do good work. They never do efficient work, and the direction they decide to take is seldom the best possible. It is rare that governments do really sensible things; their work is uniformly done in the slowest and most expensive manner possible. A man's connection with crowds weakens his judgment and unsettles his convictions. He is actually paralyzed or hypnotized by what he sees other people do or hears them say. It is impossible for any man not to be influenced by his associations—it is only a question of more or less in all cases. We have before us again the old question of suggestion which we have considered before.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### RIGHT TO PROPERTY.

When people finally come to possess clearer and more sensible ideas of property than those that now prevail, they will undoubtedly get along better than they do at present. As a matter of fact, there is no property to which any man has any more than an assumed title. No man really has anything which he can call his own. The whole idea of property comes from deception on the part of the state, which, while claiming to own the whole country, deals it out in parcels to those whom it considers deserving. The Devil put forth a similar claim in the days of our Saviour. In fact this whole property conception is an invention or an artifice of the Devil himself.

Men imagine that they own this or that. Every man owns his horse, his cow and his dog ; he also owns his wife and children. The master owns his slaves. But how did he come into the possession of these pieces of property ? Why does he own them ? He might as well pretend to own God, the air, the water, the sky, and even the food he eats. Indeed, we do speak of *our* God, *our* country, *our* territory, *our* streams, *our* mountains. How strangely absurd this is ! We really own nothing, absolutely nothing. Right of conquest—what does that amount to ? Even the things upon which our hands are placed are not really ours, since a stronger party may come along and take them away at any time. All the titles to which we pretend have come from the state. But where does the state get its titles ?

A large portion of the property of people comes by way of inheritance. But how could there be any valid title derived from a dead man ? This is also an artifice, the design of which is to keep property in families and give the state more stability and power. However, there is no semblance of justice in a claim to



property based solely on the right of inheritance. It is true that without such a law of inheritance, we should not have wealth to any appreciable extent, but we do not consider that a misfortune to society by any means. There is no great merit, and certainly no great utility, in wealth. The world would be better off without wealth. We have said that before, and we take pleasure in repeating the assertion once more. Wealth helps to develop civilization, and civilization helps to develop wealth. The two have a community of interest. In truth, they are inseparable. Wealth is always for the few, a very few, while paupers are found in unlimited numbers all along the avenues that lead to wealth.

Finally, where do rights and claims originate? Who possesses rights that are to be doled out to other people? Nobody has yet been able to justify his claim to any such prerogative. The man who presumes to grant rights and privileges is no better in any respect than other men are who make no such pretensions. We hear much about rights of seniority, of regularity, of legitimacy, and rights of birth. How preposterous!

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## CHAPTER XXX.

### OUR FALSE NOTIONS.

There are many things that we might do, if we chose, to dissipate our sorrows and lessen our sufferings, and the first step in that direction would be to lower our standard of pride and pay less regard to what we call our sense of honor. It is a well known fact that our pride is responsible for a large share of our mental sufferings, and that the causes of our sorrows are in many cases purely imaginary. If our honor were not given such a conspicuous place as it holds, and if it did not bring us so frequently into conflict with others, things would move along more smoothly than they do and we should find fewer troubles than men experience in life usually. If people were less sensitive and less proud than they are, they would not find so many things in their pathway that offend them. This is especially the case with nations. They have such extravagant notions of their rights and they pay so much regard to trifling circumstances which are supposed to affect their honor, that it is very difficult for their neighbors to continue to live with them on anything like peaceful or friendly terms.

It should be remembered that the old Greeks and Romans had no such conception of national honor as we have. Indeed, at that early day there were no nations in the proper sense of the word. Such a thing as national pride was not known to the Chinese, or to the Hindoos or Mahometans. The honor to which we hold so tenaciously and that causes us such constant trouble or concern is a growth of the Middle Ages, and it had its rise in feudal times with feudal ideas. Our pride and punctilio are knightly in their characteristics. We parade as the knights did of old, though we lack many of the virtues that belonged to that order.

It is indeed a strange thing that we are so absurdly particular about what people say of us, and yet we care so little what they think about us, either before death or after. As a matter of fact, what people think of us is all there is of the matter, and what they say of us has no great significance. At most what people say is only an expression of what they think, and they should be permitted to talk freely and without fear of giving offence, as that is the only way by which we can ascertain their feelings, wishes or intentions. We have always said that people are in no wise to blame for what they think, since thoughts always come unbidden, and are entirely outside of the control of men. But why should we be blamed for what we say, if, as has been seen, what we say is simply what we think?

If what people said were always known to be true, or if saying a thing and proving it were identical, then the case might sometimes be serious, but we all know that what people say may or may not be true, and it is very unjust to condemn a man on the bare evidence of what other men assert. If a man lies about us, the community will soon learn that he has borne false witness, and the one to suffer in the end will be the slanderer himself. But if on the other hand he has told the truth about us, what right have we to complain? So, as we have said, let people talk—talk what they please, and as much as they please.

Men as a rule should not bother their heads about the evil things that others are saying about them. It is what we ourselves know that we are, and not what people think or say we are, that should concern us. As a rule of life, the less we have to do with other people every way, the better it will be for all concerned. Let us have manliness and independence, and not waste any time in worrying over what people think and say of us. If people happen to love us, that is very well, and if they do not happen to love us, perhaps that also is well. It is certainly people's privilege to like our ways or not like them, and if they do not like them, they ought to have the privilege of ex-

pressing their opinions about them without giving offence to any one. However, if we could find any gratification in doing so, we might make the matter even by letting them know in some quiet manner that their ways are not very agreeable to ourselves.

No, it is a very silly thing to get angry at what people say about us, and especially when they amuse themselves by calling us hard names. If they were decent people, if they were really honorable people, they would not condescend to such an abuse of language as that, but if they will stoop to such epithets, the only course left for us is to turn our backs upon them and let them pass on. If others do not do what is right, that is certainly no affair of ours. What we do ourselves—that is the whole question for us to consider at all times.

The well known German philosopher, Schopenhauer, says with much truth:

“A man must himself have but a poor opinion of his own worth who hastens to prevent the utterance of an unfavorable opinion by giving his enemy a black eye. True appreciation of his own value will make a man really indifferent to insult; but if he cannot help resenting it, a little shrewdness and culture will enable him to save appearances and dissemble his anger. If we could only get rid of this superstition about honor—the idea, I mean, that it disappears when you are insulted, and can be restored by returning the insult! If we could only stop people from thinking that wrong, brutality and insolence can be legalized by expressing readiness to give satisfaction, that is, to fight in defense of it!”

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### WHAT IS TIME?

It is hard to define what cannot be defined, what has no limits, no metes and bounds, and no special characteristics of any kind. Time, like everything that is not material, is a mere conception of man, something that exists while we exist and that sinks into nothingness when we depart. It has no middle point, and neither beginning nor end. Every man has his own time, his own views of time, his own means by which he distinguishes or measures time. A long time for one man is a short time for another. We count our time from one starting point, and others count from another. The Christian nations count from the birth of Christ, while the Romans counted from the founding of Rome, and the Mahometans from the flight of their prophet. We count by days, and savages count by seasons or moons. Children and wild races have no such ideas of time as we have. They often do not know their age and they are never concerned about time generally. They do not make tasks of their work, and so time with them hardly enters into the problem.

We usually speak of three divisions of time : the past, the present and the future. But where shall we draw the line that divides the three? Things themselves have nothing to do with time ; whether they are or were or will be, they are always the same. Time belongs only to events, to things that transpire. But if you are going to apply time to them, it is the past only that comes in question. An event is not an event until it has happened, and the moment it happens, it is a thing of the past. What do we know of what is yet to come, what never has been? Absolutely nothing. Again, we repeat, it is merely the past that concerns us. We are affected only by things that have happened. It is simply these subjects that we consider and dis-



cuss. We may get some light on the nature of time by looking into the history of tenses. In grammar we have, always following custom, three tenses, the past, present and future. But if we inquire into the history and development of the tenses, we shall find that they are simply modifications of one and the same thing. *See* and *saw*, *is* and *was*, *sit* and *sat*, *begin* and *began*, *love* and *loved* are essentially one and the same word, and neither has a single element or increment that the other does not also possess. *Has gone* is really a present form, but it has a past meaning, and there is no doubt but that the past or preterit is obtained by simply dropping the *has*. It is a very common thing to get the past in precisely that way, as we say *we done it*, for *did it*, or *have done it*. That the future is a modified present is something that every philologist knows. We say *I begin to-morrow*, for I will begin. Indeed, *will begin* itself is a present form; and Latin *faciūm*, I will make, is not materially different from *facio*, I make. Every writer finds himself in doubt whether to use the present or the past form, and whether to speak of things as happening or as having happened. Shall we say: he said *he was going*, or *he is going*; he said *he was making figures*, or *he is making*? We may be certain that in all cases where the mind is in doubt, no great difference exists, and we need not worry much whether we use one form or the other. If we are at table and we are in doubt whether we had better use a fork or a spoon, we may feel certain that no great damage will be done no matter which we use. Intuition is infallible; reason is often fallible. Nature never makes any mistakes—man often does. The uneducated are frequently in doubt whether they had better say *see* or *saw*, *come* or *came*, *begin* or *begun*, *sing* or *sang* or *sung*, and the reason why they are so is that it makes no difference which word is used, the two being really identical words that have varied somewhat in form in the course of time. It is well to bear in mind that no word can change its signification, or its application, by simply changing its sound or modifying its orthography. Words come to vary in form and sound because they are used by different people, and often under different circumstances. For us everything is past, and nothing has any value until it is past. The present is a point so infinitely small that it is inappreciable. Of the future we know nothing until it has become the past.

Finally, when we speak of facts or events, time cannot properly enter into the question. If a tree is forty feet high, it is forty feet high—and time, as to-day, yesterday or to-morrow, has nothing to do with the matter. If a man is dead that is all there is of it, and whether his death occurred ten

minutes since or ten days ago does not affect the fact as a fact in the slightest. It is often difficult to decide when to say *is* and when *was*. Whatever was is, and what is was, and forever shall be. If a book is worth \$5.00, where does the question of time come in? Or if a bell has a deep tone, where does time enter into the case? It may lose or change its tone, but that is a matter that does not concern us. What may happen is entirely out of our province. It is not even worth a thought. We never know what may happen or what might happen. As intimated before, the future is outside of our domain. We may learn something from what has happened—never from what may or might happen. We may be certain that no two events ever happen twice alike in succession under any circumstances. There is always a fatal variation that makes one quite different from the other. Nature never does anything twice alike, never makes anything twice alike. It could not if it tried, for the conditions must differ somewhat in each case. The Siamese twins resembled each other greatly, and yet there was a vast difference between the two men.

If we did not have clocks to tick and strike and thus count the hours for us, or if we did not observe the sun when it sets and when it reappears in the morning,—in a word if we were not continually counting—we should know nothing about time. If we should fall asleep in a darkened room, and awake without anything to guide us, as the striking of the clock, or the light of the sun or the crowing of cocks, we could form no idea as to how long we had slept or what time it might be. There would be no time for us, unless we found something to measure by, as some sound, or the arrival of some visitor. We should be like a vessel in a fog, or a person lost in a forest, having no means of determining our bearings. In itself there is no time, and as a matter of fact time has absolutely nothing to do with things. Time itself does not move; it is only the things that measure time which move.

Time is short or long to us only as it seems; at most time is only something that seems, and as it seems to us it most assuredly does not seem to any other creature. Animals do not measure time as we do, for they have no clocks and it is highly improbable that they take note of the height of the sun at any moment. With them the question is not whether they live long or short, or how long or short, but simply whether they live at all or not and get enough to eat. To a large extent this is the problem also for the natives, or men in the wild state. They certainly do not count time as we do; they simply live to eat and eat to live. They have no tasks; they achieve nothing, they accumulate

nothing, practically speaking. They have no ambition, no aspirations, no expectations, no hopes unfulfilled, and so what difference does it make to them whether life is short or long? It is the cultivated, cultured man alone that dreads to die. He has so much work to be done, so many children to provide for, so much property to care for or dispose of, that he has no time to die and he does not care to discuss the subject. Of course he hates to die—he dreads dying above all other things. Not so with the savage or the brute. He never counts upon living. With him it is only the pain of dying, and even about that he is not so much concerned, for he does not feel and suffer as the cultured people do when they die.

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## CHAPTER XXXII.

### ANALYSIS OF MOTION.

What is motion? What does a body do when it moves? What must be done to enable it to move, or to compel it to move? Is a body ever compelled to move? All these are important questions that are not so readily answered. Certain it is they never yet have been answered in a manner that is considered entirely satisfactory. Is a body always in motion? It is so claimed. But if it is so, it can never be in motion, since in order that a body should be continually in motion, it must be continually stopping. A body cannot move unless it has begun at some point, and it can never be put in motion unless it has first been in a condition of rest. Motion and rest, like all opposites, are one and inseparable. One continually implies the other.

Does a body ever go from one point to another? What has one body to do with another? Where is the relation, what is the connection? In going, a body simply moves and keeps moving without the slightest reference to anything else. And yet according to our conception of motion, a body could not move unless it had some point to start from and some objective point to arrive at. But really when a body moves, it starts from its own place, always carries its own place with it, and when it stops, it is uniformly in its own place again. We are accustomed to say that when a body moves, it changes its place. But, really, does it do so? Is a body ever without the place it oc-

cupies? Does it ever lose it, ever change it? And if a body actually does not lose or change its place, how could it properly be said to move? One thing is evident, a body can never be quite destitute of a place; and still we seem to have the impression that when a body leaves a place, as A, it must be in a state of "betweenity" or vacuity while it is moving to the objective point B; or in other words, there must be at least an instant while it has absolutely no place. Another conception seems to prevail in regard to motion, that the body in motion stretches from A to B, and really clings to A while it is moving to B. However, this must be quite imaginary. As a matter of fact, a body in motion is independent in its action, and its movement cannot have any connection with any other body. Motion, so far as there is motion, implies absolute freedom from all ties connecting the moving body with other objects. The heavenly bodies would not move unless they were free to move.

We are fond of talking of revolutions in bodies, of bodies that revolve around some central object, as the moon around the earth and the earth around the sun. But in these cases, what connection or relation is there between the central body and the one that revolves? Absolutely none whatever. It is assumed that the sun holds the earth in its orbit, and the earth holds the moon in its place, but there is not a particle of evidence to support any such claim or contention as this. There is no such thing in nature as one body going around another. There may be scores of objects inside the circle, without their having any relation to or connection with the moving body.

We should remove from our minds, once for all, all belief in the power of attraction between bodies. There is no evidence that any attraction exists; there is no proof that any body ever exerts a power over another body at any time or under any conditions. The power of attraction, for which so much is claimed, appears to be an impossibility. There is no case in nature where any such power is exemplified. A horse may draw a sleigh, but it never draws a sleigh to itself. The sleigh would not move a hair's breadth farther than the drawing power moves. Suppose we draw a body with our hand and the help of a cord. The body moves no farther than the hand moves, and the moment the cord slackens, the power ceases to act.

Much has been said since Newton's time about the power of gravity. But is there to-day, or has there ever been, such a power as gravity? We see no evidence that there is or ever has been any such agency. Bodies may meet together, and still not be attracted. They may meet by accident, or through impulse of some kind. In the case of falling bodies there is no proof



that the attracting power of the earth is the real cause of the fall. The power of gravity is supposed to be a universal and constantly acting power, and yet it is actually rare that bodies fall. They fall only in exceptional cases. They fall not because they are attracted downward, but because they are not supported. Bodies properly supported never fall, no matter how great may be their elevation or how strong the power of gravity. Bodies can only move, and certainly they can fall only, while they are in a fluid medium the particles of which yield readily to pressure or the power of penetration. There is no motion, no visible motion, in solids. When a body falls, as in air or water, it simply sinks, and this happens because the fluid yields. There is for this sinking phenomenon no other reason apparent to the mind of man than this lack of support to which we have just referred. Some bodies sink in water, as lead, while others rise, as wood and cork do. And so it is in air and other fluids. The phenomenon clearly does not depend upon gravity, but upon the nature or characteristics of the body and the density of the medium in which it moves.

It should be noted here that all bodies are supported at all times and under all conditions, in fluids as upon solids, and whether at rest or in motion. A bird that flies is supported, just as a fish that swims, a man that walks or a train of cars that moves is supported. The fact that a fluid yields more or less readily, is no proof that it does not support bodies. A pair of springs yields, and yet it affords support. Mud or clay supports, and yet it yields to pressure. Anything, even the rocks, will yield under a heavy weight. Again we urge that all bodies, at all times, and under all circumstances, are supported. Bodies fall, not because they are attracted but because their support yields or gives way. Bodies do not fall to anything, they simply sink, and they will continue to sink so long as their support continues to yield. It is nonsense to talk about bodies falling to the surface of the earth or towards the center of the earth. The air is just as much the surface of the earth as the rocks are. Nothing falls that is properly supported; nothing fails to rise when it is lighter than the fluid in which it is immersed. Bodies fall because of their nature and the circumstances in which they are placed, and they rise for the same reason. If all bodies were alike in character they would perform alike, always, under the same conditions.

We should banish all ideas of attraction as we should banish all ideas of power. We speak of persons being attracted, as if one person drew another. To draw implies an effort on the part of the one that draws. However, it is evident that no such effort

is made or power exerted where we find that one person pleases another. The one that pleases is entirely passive, precisely as when a picture pleases or a flower pleases. People are attracted only so far as they are interested or delighted, and not because they yield to some mysterious power. The sun in a sense exercises an influence, but it exerts no power and its efforts are not directed to any object. The sun warms, but that is a mere incident and not the result of effort or exertion. What is most absurd in our theories of gravity is that the earth draws down and is at the same time drawn up. Where do we find anything like this in practice? The horse might draw the sleigh, but who ever heard of a sleigh drawing the horse? We venture to say that not a particle of evidence has ever yet been produced that shows that power is exerted at any time, in any way, by matter over matter.

We speak of weight as if it were the measure of the earth's attraction. But weight is rather a measure of the support which a body receives. In air it weighs more than in water because it is supported less. If the air was more dense, bodies in the air would weigh less. Bodies also weigh more or less according to their density, and somewhat according to their form. A balloon in the air weighs nothing, and so with a cork in the water.

The subject of centripetal and centrifugal forces may next engage our attention. It is generally assumed that the heavenly bodies are kept in their orbits through the agency of these two forces, the centripetal tending to draw to the center and the centrifugal carrying the body away. As often happens, the theory in this case does not accord with the facts. At least there is no phenomenon anywhere in nature, so far as our experience extends, that would serve to substantiate any such doctrine as that taught by the scientific men of the present day on this subject. It is commonly supposed that this phenomenon is entirely similar to that of a ball made to revolve around a central point through the help of a string fastened at one end. By means of force applied directly to the ball, it can be made to revolve. But let us see what actually happens. The string does not draw the ball to the center, it merely prevents it from going away from the center farther than its own length. So far from the string having any drawing power, the moment it slackens it becomes powerless. In the case of the sling, which is similar, the operator is enabled to draw the ball down, in its movement, to lift it up and to carry it either to the right or left. After the ball is made to revolve rapidly and it is finally let go, it does not move to the center nor fly away from it, but it goes off in a tangent in the very direction it was going when released. No body can of

itself change its direction while in motion. There is no true centrifugal force, as there is no centripetal force. The ball or stone when released has no regard either for a center or for circular motion. As said before, it simply moves off in the direction it was moving at the time it was released.

In the case of the sun and the earth there is no string nor connection of any kind, and no means by which force could be exerted upon bodies millions of miles away. The sun could not put heavenly bodies in motion nor control nor direct their movements after the movement had begun. Instead of being the source or origin of power, the sun is doubtless subject to the same laws as the other heavenly bodies, and it is every way as helpless as they are. The power that moves the heavenly bodies must reside in the bodies themselves. No power can act where it is not. Moreover, it must be remembered that the sun is not a central point but only an approximation to something of that kind. The paths of the planets are not circles; they are not even ellipses, nor are they regular paths of any kind. Planets do not follow the same path for any two succeeding years. It is absurd to claim that the sun keeps the planets in their orbits when the fact is they have no one course which they always pursue. The heavenly bodies are not alone in moving irregularly. No body in motion on the earth ever moves regularly. The bird that flies goes along by fits and stops and starts, just like a row boat which is propelled by oars. It does not go straight ahead; no object that moves goes straight ahead or follows a straight line. It weaves along from side to side, and up and down, as a man does when he walks or a horse when he trots. The ball after it leaves the rifle is far from moving in a direct path. It twists and turns and oscillates and revolves. So does water when it is poured from a vessel. Notice the stream that flows, or the flame or smoke that rises in any case, and see if it moves regularly in a straight line. On the other hand it curls and twists and revolves in a most curious manner. No body, as a top, can turn or move in its place; it must have room to vibrate in or wobble, as the planets do, or as a piece of wood does in a turning-lathe. Movement is rather in spirals than in circles, as we can see in the falling of a small stream of syrup from a vessel.

Again, it is, as already intimated, of the very essence of motion that moving bodies must continually stop while they are in motion. A body moving must stop before it can change its direction, and it can move in only one direction at a time. We know that the man that walks, the horse that runs, the bird that flies and the boat that is propelled, are constantly stopping. They must stop; that is one of the essential conditions of the case. A

*body must stop to move, and it must move to stop.* When a man walks, he keeps one foot on the ground, so that he is practically always at rest. So in rolling a cube, which is the same as rolling a wheel. The cube has one side or corner always on the ground and at rest. A log rolls in the same manner, being circular in form and having many short, straight sides, with angles as in polygons. A body that moves is always supported, as the body at rest is always supported. A train of cars moving a hundred miles an hour is supported; so is the bird that flies or the fish that swims. As it is supported, it is always practically at rest. There must also be resistance, or bodies could not move; there must be something substantial for the wing of the bird or the oar of the boat to operate upon. An oar pushes against the water as the pole is pushed against a wall to put a boat in motion. Fluids offer just as much resistance as solids do, only they yield more readily.

And after all that has been said about motion, and with all its presumed importance, it is only a stupendous dream! It is merely what man thinks or imagines. It is not something stable, with a fixed and unvarying character of its own. No such motion as this can be found in all this world. Of itself alone we can never decide whether a body moves or not. We cannot even decide whether we ourselves move or not. We must have something to start from and mark by. If we lose sight of that, we lose sight of motion entirely. If we are shut in a car or boat where we can see no objects by which to judge, we cannot tell where we are nor whether the boat or car is moving or standing still. So if we are up in a balloon where there is nothing to guide us, we get no idea of motion. We could hardly demonstrate that we move. It is easier to demonstrate that we are always at rest, and yet we know that we are always in motion! It is a strange matter, view it as we like. It is probably the fact that we move only by participating in the motion of some other body, as in the case of riding in a car, while we are really at rest. Motion produces no effect upon the character of bodies. They must remain exactly the same, or they could not change their place. Motion is rather the result than the cause of change.

We never see things move. We merely notice that they have moved by their changed relations with bodies around them, but in many cases it is hard to determine which is the body that has moved. The distance would be the same whether A moves or B moves, and distance is all that we know about motion. How shall we ever have motion around a center, when the distance never changes? Again, for an object to be properly a



center of revolution, it must be stationary; but the heavenly bodies are not stationary, and therefore they cannot properly be considered to be centers of revolution. In fact, there is no such revolution.

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Unquestionably the time will come some day or other when men will change their ideas radically on such subjects as time, distance, motion, attraction and power generally. People ask what makes a body move, and then they answer their own question, by saying that impulse or attraction is the cause. These terms are used simply to conceal ignorance. But it would be more candid, and better every way, to answer in such cases that we do not know. However, our pride intervenes and we content ourselves with an idea, and with what is really a spirit or a spook. No spook has done more harm to science than our conception of "attraction," chiefly from the fact that when a false or fictitious cause is accepted, all search for the true cause is abandoned.

Motion, like time, distance, size, is in all cases delusive. It is an inference, a conclusion, an impression, on the observer's part. It is impossible to picture motion; we can represent only some fixed position, as a raised foot, which leaves the impression of motion. All that we see, all our ideas of every kind, are the results of calculation and conclusions on our part. In the kinetoscope we have only a series of fixed positions which follow each other in quick succession in such a manner as to leave upon the observer an impression of movement. A body never moves—it merely is moved. It never changes its place, since its place is an inseparable part of itself.

Again we say there is no such thing as motion, as there is really no such thing as time or distance. Men have simply ideas of motion, as they have ideas of time, distance and dimension. These ideas are constantly changing. Men now believe that the earth revolves around the sun, but the world is sure to reject that belief some day or other. We cannot picture time; we cannot picture size or distance. A small man looks just as big on paper as a large man does. All pictures leave false impressions. Ireland may have as much space as Russia has—it all depends on the scale. Maps do not show distances, though we may form an estimate by applying the scale and calculating.

As philosophers we are constantly asserting what we know to be false and treating as realities things that we know do not exist. We imagine, and then we believe we know. During our

whole existence we are dealing merely with our thoughts, and we are constantly comparing and combining these thoughts in order to develop new thoughts. Our whole knowledge is simply what we think. We have nothing but notions and impressions. We cannot have the slightest conception how other people feel or how they think. We are constantly talking about centers and circles, when we must confess that as a matter of fact there are no real centers or circles. So we talk about ellipses and parabolas, when we know that nature furnishes no examples of regular figures of any kind. We assert that the sun holds the earth in its place, when we know that nothing holds the earth in its place; it moves about freely and continuously and it never pursues the same path any two days or any two years in succession. Indeed, it is evident that the sun cannot hold itself in its place, for it is continually in motion like other bodies. We are constantly assigning assumed or fictitious causes of things, when we know that there are no causes of things in the first place. Scientists assume that this or that is so, and then they imagine that they have demonstrated a truth. They claim that if the centrifugal force ceased to act, the revolving body would drop to the central body at once. But most assuredly it would not—at least it never does. Besides, how could we ever stop or cancel a force? A force can be deflected, but it cannot be diminished or destroyed. Nothing can be diminished or destroyed.

Every landscape is simply a map; the heavens above are for our eyes nothing more than a chart; and like all maps, neither the landscape nor the heavens give us any true conception of either the size or distance of the objects presented to our view. In the case of the landscape, we never can tell how far the trees are from each other, nor how large they are, unless we approach quite near them. Indeed, size always varies with distance, and so we cannot say with propriety that an object has any particular size which is specially its own. The size of an object near by is only one of its sizes; at ten feet it has a smaller size, and at a hundred feet one still smaller. At a mile it perhaps can hardly be seen, and then its size is that of a mere speck. So with the heavenly bodies. For us here below their size, distance and location are just what they appear to be to our mortal ken. What they may appear to be to our imagination after a series of mathematical calculations is made, is quite another matter. This imaginary size does not concern us in practice. All that we know of objects under any circumstances is how they appear to us.

Time and distance, and even motion, are not things, nor are they in things. They are merely between things, and the ex-

istence they enjoy is extremely precarious. You cannot see distance; you can only estimate it. You cannot see time; you can calculate or count it. You cannot see size, nor form any clear notion of what or how it is. You may have your idea about the matter, and you cannot go beyond that. No two people agree in their estimates of size. How large or small an object may be, is largely a matter of guesswork at last. As to the distance of heavenly bodies from each other, how can we speak of such a relation? Distance applies only to fixed points, but the heavenly bodies are constantly in motion. How could we apply the term distance to such bodies? Distance is something that remains and is unchangeable.

Time, distance, motion, quantity, number and dimensions have nothing to do with the character of objects. If a dollar expanded to twice its size, it would still be only a dollar; and if it could repeat itself and become twenty, it would still remain a dollar, precisely as if it had merely changed its location. Repeating and extending do not add to weight or power, nor do they develop any new characteristics. They are nothing but conceptions.

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## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### THE VALUE OF ART.

We would like to say something that would have a tendency to interest our readers in the subject of art, something that would enable them to understand its character and bring them to an appreciation of its merits higher than that which prevails among people at the present time. The opinion is far too common among ordinary people that the productions of art come exclusively under the head of things ornamental, and that they do not properly belong in the category of things useful. This, so far as it exists, is a mistaken notion.

The term art is applied very freely and often very inaccurately. Indeed it is like many other words, incapable of receiving any precise or reliable definition. Art branches off into science, and it happens often that it cannot be distinguished from that branch. Without science to enable us to understand the nature, uses and capabilities of things, we should never have

any demand for art. Art is what man has learned to do ; under the head of art, many of the most glorious achievements of man are enumerated. The birds that build their nests and the bees that construct their cells have their arts as well as beings have that belong to a higher order. But usually when we speak of art we have in mind the works of man. Everything that man does comes properly in the domain of art, and what he accomplishes is either well or ill done according as he does or does not understand his art.

It is an art to make shoes, as well as to paint pictures, or to sing songs and dance jigs. There are the Mechanical Arts, which embrace what are usually spoken of as trades. These are known as the useful arts, in contradistinction to the other branches which are known as the Liberal or Fine Arts, embracing music, painting, sculpture and architecture. These are commonly supposed to be mainly ornamental in character, and as such they are to be either taken up or neglected according to the tastes or convenience of the individual. It is these so-called Liberal Arts, and especially Music, Dancing and Poetry to which we propose to give most of our attention in the discussion which we have now in view. We might notice in passing that art has been viewed differently among different peoples and at different periods of the world's history. In the Middle Ages the seven Liberal Arts were the following : Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Arithmetic, Music, Geometry and Astronomy. Of these seven we at the present time consider music alone as an art, and the remaining six come under the head of science.

It is art chiefly that characterizes civilized life and distinguishes it from life that is properly barbarous or uncivilized. The natives or aborigines of all countries, like the birds and beasts, their companions, have but few arts and those of the simplest character. They have but little knowledge of nature, but little science, and their disregard of art follows as a natural consequence. There are only a few things that they can do, because there are so few things that they know. As they increase in knowledge, the arts are developed ; or to speak more accurately, science and art develop at one and the same time, and the one continually reacts upon the other.

As a matter of fact, we could not have civilization without art ; it is by the productions of art alone that civilized countries become known. Their achievements in art are all they have to show ; it is by art simply that their progress is determined. What has Egypt left for us to wonder at or admire but works of art—its pyramids, its sculpture, its paintings, its architecture ? Have Babylon and Nineveh left us anything more or anything



less? What has kept Greece in such lasting remembrance with us, if not the perfection of its sculpture and architecture? It is true that Greece gave us philosophy besides, as Rome gave us law and government, but these are of little account among the great masses of mankind compared with the splendid works of art. Art can be seen and appreciated; philosophy and law are matters only for study and meditation. Men go to Rome to-day not to study law or government, but to see the Vatican and its treasures, to visit St. Peters and the Pantheon, to climb the stone seats of the Coliseum, to examine temples and arches and columns, to study paintings and view sculptured forms. Even art in ruins, as we find it in Rome, in Athens, in Thebes, in Palmyra, in Persepolis, is far more attractive to the world, and more valuable, than philosophy in its most refined form or in its highest stage of development. And so when we cross the Atlantic and brave the perils of the deep in order to visit the modern cities of Europe, what is it that we go to study or observe, if not what man has done in the line of art? In Paris it is temples and palaces; it is sculpture and paintings in their highest development; it is fountains and arches and columns and avenues and parks. In London it is cathedrals, palaces and museums, with their wonderful treasures of art in all departments; and so in Berlin, St. Petersburg and Vienna we see the same class of things presented in new forms, with new beauties and new features of interest. On all sides and at every step what especially attracts our attention is some form, some production of art.

There is no question at all that art, even in what is considered its ornamental form, is highly educational in its influence upon the minds or hearts of mankind. It is well known that there is more of *expression*, more true revelation, in a painting or a sculptured form than there is in a poem. The words in a poem give ideas, but they are always limited in scope and often misleading in the delineation attempted. A picture gives a far more accurate and more vivid description than is done by the printed page, and the same is true of sculptured forms. So again there is a wonderful amount of instruction in a work of architecture like the cathedrals of the Middle Ages in Europe and the temples and tombs of Egypt and the East. In the fullest sense of the term they are bound books, with the leaves spread open for the student to read. It is not well enough known, or if known, it is not sufficiently appreciated, that every painting and every sculptured figure or group, like that of Laocoon and his sons writhing in the folds of the monster, is a whole volume in itself. Paintings and sculptured forms have a story to tell, and

if the work is well done, the story is uniformly well told. It is a great mistake on the part of the average man to think that books alone are the medium through which thoughts and ideas are communicated. Thoughts and ideas are conveyed by signs and gestures, and stories are told in the drama and even in music, particularly in the form of opera. No, the value of art lies in the expression which it gives to thought and conception, and its chief importance is found in its wonderful influence upon character.

There is no question but that it would be better for this world, far better, if more attention were given to the study of art in common life and less attention to the accumulation of wealth. Instead of striving to surpass or subdue our fellow men, let us strive to render the world more beautiful, more attractive and more interesting than it is to those with whom we associate. By advancing art in this way, we would do far more for the world and for its improvement than we could by bestowing gifts inconsiderately upon undeserving recipients. Nature has done its full share : it has adorned the fields and forests with beautiful and interesting objects, and having done this, it has left the rest for man to do. Why should men, enlightened and intelligent men, continue to be so remiss in the performance of this important part of their duty? We have beautiful birds and flowers and shrubs given to us. Why should we not go on and fill the world with our own attractive productions—with beautiful homes, beautiful lawns and parks, beautiful etchings and paintings and statuary? Why should we not have music and dancing in every family? Why is so little attention given to these inexpensive and yet essential recreations? It is hard to explain why. Certain it is that if we had more music, more dancing, more poetry and more art of all kinds, we should have more contentment and enjoyment, and doubtless far less of misery and crime. Let us cultivate art not so much as a source of enjoyment as a source of education and advancement,—in other words, for its effect upon the soul.

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There is far more in art than people generally suppose. As already intimated, the productions of art are properly not imitations but creations. A composition in music is a creation; a painting is a creation, and a statue is a creation. A piece of poetry is likewise a creation. They are all something new, they are products direct from man's mental workshop. We have al-

ways considered that art deserves encouragement in all its departments, and it is well worth the attention of every intelligent being. As a diversion, it is far better than the pursuit of pleasure or the acquisition of wealth. In fact if people would do more that is proper and sensible, they would find less time to devote to crime and folly. The mind will always be occupied with some particular object that commands the attention—if not with something sensible, then with something worthless; if not with something worthy, then with something wicked; if not with valuable thoughts, then with wild dreams and absurd visions. There is no doubt that very much of our crime arises from the desire of having something to do: and even the desire of conquest and the continued accumulation of wealth, long after the need of money has disappeared, result from the same cause. People must always find something to operate upon, and why does not art in its various developments open by far the most desirable field for suitable employment?

We have always looked upon dancing as an art that is deserving of much more attention than it receives. Most people have not a proper appreciation of its character and value, and therefore it is somewhat in disrepute. But that of itself proves nothing. Many vocations that we now consider worthy, if not honorable, have been, at different periods of the world's history, considered anything but respectable employments. In the Middle Ages a merchant or a trader held rather a low rank, and in some countries to-day the priest and the schoolmaster are usually neglected. In Germany the barber was the surgeon and blood-letter. And with us to-day, a man who follows a trade is supposed to stand lower than one who has a profession; or, in other words, an impecunious lawyer stands higher in society than a prosperous and progressive blacksmith. As we have intimated, all this proves nothing—except that it is the fashion. In reality any one business or any one occupation is just as proper and creditable as any other. It is all in the man. So it is in dancing. There is no question but that it should rank as an art with music, and certainly with painting and sculpture. It is not indispensable. Neither are they. Music has its uses and its value, and so has dancing.

The true nature of dancing is little understood, and its place in nature as one of the agencies having an influence upon the development of man is not duly estimated by the public. Dancing is one thing, and dances as we have them to-day are quite another thing. When we speak of dancing as something to be approved of and encouraged, we have in mind dancing as it existed in the earlier ages, and as it still exists in many countries,

and not dances and balls as we have them at the present time. The latter have become evils, not from dancing as an art, but from the manner in which dancing is conducted and the results that follow. Dancing is not necessarily an all night affair. It may occur in the afternoon, or at least in the early evening, as it does in southern Europe and throughout the East. It need not be in a closed or over-heated room. Most of the dancing of former ages was on the lawn under the shade of trees, as it is to-day in nearly all warm countries.

Again, dancing is not necessarily a social affair; it has nothing more to do with love and amours necessarily than sculpture has, or music or poetry. It is by no means necessary that the two sexes should take part in the same dance—they may and they may not, according to circumstances. In ancient Greece the men and women did not join in their dances. When the Dervishes dance in the East to-day, it is the men alone that take part in the exercise. In its origin dancing was a religious ceremony, as painting, music and sculpture were, at one time, exclusively religious arts. Dancing in some form seems to be common in all religions. The Israelites danced around the golden calf; David danced before the ark. The Greeks danced everywhere and on any pretext. They danced in the temples, the woods, the fields. In the early centuries of Christianity sacred dancing was encouraged by the church. Even the angels danced, it was supposed. And to-day we ourselves have the May-pole dance.

Dancing should be a private, and even a family affair, confined to small gatherings, at proper times and in proper places. Dancing may be an individual performance, but it is more interesting to dance with one or more companions, as in music it is more agreeable to sing or play in concert with others than alone. Association affords a certain support and encouragement, and in all cases to act in harmony with others will be found to have a wholesome educational influence. It is the same in conversation. A person may talk to himself, but if he talks with others he has an opportunity to learn and thus he may improve.

We encourage dancing as a custom for its healthful influence upon character and conduct. It is a delightful exercise, a pleasing and innocent pastime to begin with. It develops a love for harmony and creates an interest in the beautiful and the good. It cultivates the graces and improves the disposition. It leads to an interest in music; indeed, music and dancing are always associated together. They are both matters of measure and time, and they both depend upon harmony for their principal effect. People who devote a portion of their time to music



and dancing, have less attention to give to things that are vain and unworthy.

Finally, dancing, where it is well executed, is beautiful as a spectacle—no athletic performance can be more so. Those who can dance well, and with becoming grace, have certainly one accomplishment of which they may be proud. Nothing pleases the eye and delights the soul more than the poetry and rhythm of motion. Dancing is also an expression of feeling and sentiment, far more so than either music or painting. Dancing represents movement—music and painting cannot do so, certainly they cannot with any success. Dancing often degenerates into pantomime. The female figure in dancing is charming to the eye of the most common observer. Nothing pleases so highly as graceful movement. The gently flowing robe that woman wears serves to heighten the effect of her dancing. It is in the ballet dance alone that she appears hideous. She ought to conceal her shapeless limbs, instead of exposing them as she does in this instance. Man is a most unfortunate animal, because he is obliged to wear trousers. What a ridiculous figure he always makes! And when he dances, we always feel that if he could only hide those big feet and queer shaped legs in some way, how fortunate for him it would be! How much better would he appear if clad in the simple dress of the East or wearing the old Roman toga?

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All art is composition, and all composition, whatever be its character or purpose, may be called art. Art is a combining of elements or factors and so bringing them together and arranging them as to produce some contemplated effect. All language is art, and in some of its developments it belongs to the highest forms of art. Language is simply a form or medium of expression. So a poem is a piece of art, music is an art, among the most important of all the arts. And the same may be said of architecture. In all forms of art we have composition, a combination of parts so arranged as to produce a certain effect or to render a certain expression. A poem expresses, music expresses, and so a statue expresses, and a structure or building also expresses. They all influence the emotions and impel men to action. It is through art that men are largely influenced; and through art exclusively, in some of its phases, men acquire their education. If nothing was expressed and nothing indicated, there would never be anything known. Education itself is an art; indeed, all that man does or accomplishes comes, properly speaking, in the domain of art.

In the early ages of the Greeks, as well as of other peoples, the multitude received its education mainly through music, poetry, the drama and sculpture. Whatever tends to influence the character and conduct of men and impels them in some new direction may be considered educational. Art may be said to imply genius, for without genius nothing can ever be achieved by art. There are high and low orders of art, as there are high and low orders of genius.

True art is never ornament; art properly speaking has nothing to do with ornament. True art is never pasted on; it is something independent in itself. Incidentally a flower adorns a lawn, but that is not really its office. A picture may be an ornament, but it is never an appendage. It always has a place of its own. Should we call a cathedral of the Middle Ages an ornament to a town simply because it is beautiful or imposing? Shall we call a horse or a bird an ornament because of its attractive features?

It is a serious mistake to confound art with ornament in any case. We treat it as a luxury, when it is really a necessity. Through art alone man makes himself manifest. Art is man's own creation; through art men make themselves equal with the gods. It is a great mistake—though the idea prevails generally—for any one to imagine that art is purely imitative, and that all that we do is to copy nature. True art is never imitative; it is in the highest sense creative. What is called transfer work, or copying in any form, or even photographic work, cannot be called art, except to a very limited extent, in the manipulation of plates. These effects are not produced; they are simply copies or reprints. The painting by a true artist is never a copy, it is not a likeness properly called. It is ideal, and is practically a creation of the artist. It is not a second being that he produces, but a new being of his own is presented on canvas. It is the artist's own conception. Two different artists treat the same subject differently, and of course with entirely different results. People see things differently, and hence two artists paint things differently. A Greek statue is not a copy; it is not even a likeness. It is the creation of some artist. It was in creation that the greatness of Phidias lay, as it was in creation that the greatness of Michael Angelo was found.

Science is to know; art is to do, and to know how to do. To live, and to know how to live, is an art—the highest of all arts. Indeed this art includes all other arts.

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It is remarkable that in a country like ours, where so much

is expended upon education, so little attention should be given to such a subject as music. The fact is that in America the value and importance of music is but imperfectly understood, and too few appreciate the powerful educational influence which music exerts for good upon the masses of mankind. Much less attention is given in this country to the study and practice of music, either vocal or instrumental, than in any other civilized land. We have a few good musicians, but many of these are either foreigners or the descendants of foreigners. The Germans are far above and beyond us in musical acquirements and so are the Italians. Music is a part of the ordinary education of the children in Italy, France and Germany, and for a long time music also flourished in the Netherlands.

What we need in this country is to have music popularized. It is something for every family, and not for a few amateurs and professionals. Music should be taught in our schools, as it is in Germany, at least in its elements. It is an acquirement that deserves to be encouraged by the state, as it is in Europe. It is something that should be a part of every child's education, as much as either grammar or penmanship. Of course we should not expect everybody to excel as musicians; neither do we expect all pupils to excel in any branch of education in school. Every one familiar with history is aware of the fact that in Greece music as a part of the people's education was considered of the highest importance, and the same is true of the Egyptians and other ancient peoples.

The affinity between music and poetry is well known. It is the measure, the rhythm, in both that pleases the ear and stirs the soul. The same is true of dancing, with which music has always been closely connected. During the early centuries of our era, music was one of the most powerful and important agencies employed in the service of the church. Indeed, there can be no true religion without both poetry and music. They both affect the soul as no other influence does. The Hebrews were not only an emotional and superstitious people, but they were also a musical people. We might add that in the Middle Ages, in Europe, music was chiefly vocal, instrumental music being little known and rarely practiced.

Martin Luther says, "Music is one of the best of arts. The notes make the text living. I give to music, after theology, the next place and the highest honor." Buckle, in his *History of Civilization* says: "In very early culture periods, and before people were acquainted with the use of letters, there was felt the need of something to enliven their leisure moments, and in war to stimulate their courage. This need was satisfied by the dis-

covery of ballads, and these form the groundwork of all historical knowledge. They were sung by all classes of men whose particular business it was to preserve traditions for posterity." If the world had had no music, we should have no early history, because it would not be preserved. Buckle continues: "The jingle pleases the ear of the barbarian and affords a security that he will hand his story down to his children in an unimpaired state. This guarantee against error increases still farther the value of these ballads."

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## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### A NEW VIEW OF CIVILIZATION.

All civilization comes from the city; if people lived in the country only and were all either herdsmen or agriculturists, we should never have what might properly be called civilization. The very name itself, derived as it is from *civis*, a citizen, or *civitas*, a city or a state, indicates that it was originally a matter of cities. Civilization implies many elements or factors that are contemporaneous in their action—among these being private property, education, wealth, government, religion, and above all a settled place of abode and an established mode of life. These conditions are met with in the city, but they do not exist in a country or pastoral life, where people change their place of residence regularly. Civilization is necessarily a matter of contact and friction. It is even a matter of conflict and competition. One man living alone would never become civilized, no matter how great his capabilities might be naturally. Without contact with those better than himself, or wiser, he could never improve. All our improvement comes from contact with others who have knowledge and who have had advantages that we do not possess. No man teaches himself—all education must come from or through external influences. A man to learn must have the help of instruments, and in order to advance in any way, he must have some assistance from those who are more gifted or better informed than himself. Slaves learn rapidly from their masters, but masters learn little or nothing from their slaves. Hence, in subjugating inferior races, it is the conquered always that improve, while the conqueror deteriorates.

Men begin to advance only when they associate together and live in groups; when they have become scattered or they wander



about, they either retrograde or remain stationary. Again, we repeat, men can have civilization only when they begin to found cities. And where were cities originally located? Where the topography of the country and the advantages of climate and commerce favored them. Cities are founded exclusively upon commerce, and it is through this instrumentality alone that cities become rich and powerful. Cities, like individuals, do not evolve riches from themselves, but they secure their wealth exclusively from outside sources.

The cities of ancient times were generally found in fertile valleys, along rivers which were the avenues over which the products of the country were brought. Nineveh and Babylon of old were in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, and Thebes was in the valley of the Nile. Many cities like Damascus, Baalbec and Bagdad were on the routes of caravans, and they gained their wealth and importance from that source. But the most famous cities of the past were maritime cities, and their wealth was acquired through the commerce that was carried on with the people of distant lands. We might name Venice, in this connection, also Genoa, Naples, Rome, Athens, Alexandria, Beyrout, Smyrna, Tyre, Rhodes, and other cities less known, or at least not so well remembered.

The course which civilization followed, along or around the Mediterranean, has now been fairly well ascertained. It started, so far as we are concerned, in Asia Minor, in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates, where Babylon and Nineveh arose. This was not far from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, and to these shores their influence and conquests were soon extended. Under this influence the Phenicians eventually developed into a progressive and powerful people. About the same time, or at some other time not very remote, the Egyptians came into prominence, and by this people civilization was ultimately carried to a higher state of development.

Greece got her lessons unquestionably from Egypt and Phenicia—just how much from one and how much from the other, is not now known. Greece took up the lessons she had received and from them remarkable results were obtained. To this day she is the instructress of the world in philosophy and art, and even in science and religion. There is very little that we have learned that Greece did not know two thousand years ago and over. The authentic history of Greece dates from 770 B. C., when the country consisted of a number of unimportant little states. The history of Athens, so far as it is known to be authentic, dates from 680 B. C., and for several hundred years it ran along with its variations and vicissitudes till long after

Christ,—at one time independent, and at another occupied by the Persians; for a time under the rule of the Spartans, later coming under the yoke of Macedonia, and finally becoming a mere province of Rome—but with all these changes, still exercising a remarkable influence upon the civilized world through the agency of its literature and art. Indeed, the occupation by the Roman emperors served to give it more eclat than it had before, and it became the source of learning and of instruction in art till well along in the Christian era.

What were the conditions that rendered Athens so famous and gave it such great renown throughout the civilized world? How did this city become so enlightened and finally so eminent? The settled portions of Greece constituted only a limited territory, and Athens was never a city of more than 25,000 freemen, under whom were held 400,000 helots or slaves. But the Athenians had become, through their arts and abilities, rich and influential. All the men were gentlemen of leisure, and they devoted themselves chiefly to music, art, discussion, legislation and the study of philosophy. It is only men who are situated as they were that could afford to pursue such a course of life. Men who have a living to earn and are obliged to work have but little time and less inclination for study and inquiry. Such people never become learned, and they cannot be called enlightened in the proper sense of the term.

Athens rose above all other cities as the sun of civilization, sending forth its rays to enlighten and vivify the countries coming within its sphere of influence. Colonies were planted along the shores and on the islands of the Mediterranean, and even in Italy, a country which lay near at hand. Naples was founded by Greeks, and Sicily had many Greek settlements. As Greece brought its civilization from the East originally, so it afterwards returned it to the East in an improved form. Through Alexander and his conquests Grecian civilization was carried back into Asia Minor, over into India, and finally into Egypt where Alexandria was founded and a seat of learning was established. There were no railroads or telegraphs in those days, and so all intercourse with neighbors was carried on with boats, upon rivers and on the sea. Hence civilizing influences were confined mainly to the shores of the Mediterranean and they rarely extended far inland. But vessels possessed of both size and speed have been in use not only for hundreds but for thousands of years, and to go from Greece to any country on the southern or eastern side of the Mediterranean implies a journey of only a few days. It must also be remembered that Asia Minor and Egypt are very near to Athens, and that Italy is nearer still.

To-day it is only a day's passage from Patras in Greece to Brindisi in Italy.

To make progress in science and art, or in other words in civilization, or even in wealth, does not require great numbers in population, or even a great extent of territory. Greece, as we have noticed, was insignificant in both these respects. So Venice was only a single city, but it gained both power and wealth, and it also made great advancement in the arts and in civilization. Genoa is another instance, and Rome is another. Babylon and Palmyra, and even Thebes and Carthage, afford further illustrations in the same direction. Palestine was also small, even insignificant in point of territory, and yet its religion and philosophy subdued the world, with the powerful aid, be it remembered, of the Roman emperors.

How did the continent of Europe become civilized and finally enlightened? Wholly through contact with the Romans and finally through the subjugation effected by the armies of that warlike and aggressive people. It is perhaps true that no people can become fully enlightened and develop a philosophy or religion of their own without passing through a period of slavery under the dominion of a race stronger and more advanced than themselves. This was the history of every one of the countries of Europe. It was the history also of Greece, of Egypt and of the Israelites. The enlightened and the unenlightened continually act and react upon each other. They are complements, and each one implies the existence of the other.

The primary characteristic in the history of races is ignorance. If people were not ignorant, they could not learn, and hence they could not advance. Rome was overthrown by the ignorant and barbarous peoples whom it had first conquered and then instructed. It is fated that the sons, or the grandsons, of masters shall themselves become slaves, and that the sons of slaves, or the grandsons, shall themselves become masters in their turn. This phenomenon will be found repeated over and over again in the history of the world. Rome conquered and educated the Goths and Vandals of northern Europe, and they in turn overran the provinces of the Roman empire and became the masters of the very people who centuries before had subjugated them. The Moors held Spain over 700 years, but they were at last overwhelmed by the descendants of those whom they had formerly subdued and oppressed, and as fugitives they were driven back into the deserts of Africa whence they came.

But is civilization worth the price that it costs? Is it a blessing to a man or an evil? As a question, this is identical with another question: Is slavery a blessing? Certain it is, as

already intimated, that civilization cannot be attained without passing through a probationary state of slavery. And civilization itself is only a state of slavery in a modified form. Even knowledge tends to make men autocratic and imperious, because knowledge is power. Knowledge gives men strength, and strength leads to conquest. The ignorant are always weak, and they are peculiarly liable to be taken at a disadvantage. Knowledge makes men confident and bold; ignorance makes them timid and suspicious. It will be remembered that God condemned our first parents simply because they wanted to get knowledge. Why did he do so? And yet we, in our present civilized state, spend our whole life in trying to get knowledge!

Civilization is disease. Its career is that of man in his declining years. It is the last chapter in the book—it is the end of the series. After civilization comes chaos, and finally darkness and barbarism once more. Thus far in the history of the world no nation has ever yet survived its civilization, or passed beyond the limits that civilization had attained. Civilization ends in dissolution.

Civilization means progress and progress means discontent and dissatisfaction. Civilization means the continued development of new desires, and where one desire is satisfied a dozen new desires are sure to arise in its place. Hence people in the civilized state are never contented. They are always complaining of their ills and misfortunes, their diseases and afflictions. They adore the doctors as they do their Saviour, and the apothecary shop they regard as something indispensable. They buy syrup by the case and pills in quantities. They imagine that they would surely die if they were not perpetually "taking something." They doctor not only the body but also the mind, the soul. They doctor the laws, they doctor the state, doctor everything. They consider every change an improvement, simply because it is a change.

Things are not thus among the barbarous races, or with men in the natural state. These people take things as they come, and they are not continually doctoring. They have some simple remedies, as the lower animals have theirs. These remedies are known to all alike and they are as free as the air they breathe. They take their remedies as they take their food, not because it is fashionable, but because they desire it, and instinct teaches them that it is what they need. In a state of barbarism it is health and vigor that prevails; in a state of civilization corruption and decay are always found to be common. In the civilized state, men rise to fall, and when they fall, they rise no more. There may be a happy land of Canaan beyond the realms of civilization, but no one as yet has been so fortunate as to reach it, or even to discover its location.



## CHAPTER XXXV.

### THE TRUE POLICY.

Every man should have some place of residence, some group or family with which he is identified. He should by no means be allowed, as he is now, to go when he pleases and where he pleases. Our frequent changes of place are peculiar to modern times. In other days every man lived in some place and something was known of his character and antecedents. There was some family group responsible for his misdoings and ready to protect and defend him when danger threatened. Most of our social troubles, and a large share of our crimes, arise from this freedom of travel, as well as from the ease with which strangers can obtrude themselves upon new communities. It was not so in the old German days, when no stranger was received unless some one vouched for him. He was not allowed to transact business with the natives. A stranger in those days stood very much in the relation of an enemy, as he does still with the Arabs and robbers generally. In Rome the foreigner was denied the right of making purchases, and he was excluded from business of most kinds. There was no mancipation or nexum for him. The Roman law was for Romans only. A foreigner could not be a witness. With strangers business was formless, and money down. Indeed, this principle of receiving strangers with caution is well known in certain departments even now. When a new name is proposed in any of our societies, a committee is appointed and a careful inquiry is made into the standing, character and history of the candidate. Why should not precisely the same precautions be taken, in some way, whenever a stranger presents himself for admission into any community? When so many rascals are abroad, we have a perfect right to assume that every stranger is a rascal, until he furnishes evidence to prove the contrary. If this simple and perfectly practicable precaution were

taken, that step alone would prevent nine-tenths of our crimes. If a man were known to be a dangerous person, or a scoundrel, we would certainly keep out of his way. We would not allow him in our midst for any considerable time. Every man should expect to live upon the record or reputation that he has already made.

Every man should have not only a home but a business or vocation of some kind, and some certain means of making a good, honest living. This would of itself dispose of the tramp nuisance, and if there were dependents of any kind, they would consist of only the disabled and helpless, who should always be cared for by the family or group to which they belong. This is no new idea. It is as old as the world. The new idea lies wholly in the irregular, unbusinesslike way in which communities are now managed. There is nothing safe, sensible or substantial in our present methods of conducting our business affairs. Instead of closing the bars and keeping the rascals out, we leave all the bars down and permit the worst of the race to come in at pleasure. Instead of trying to discover methods by which crime and suffering could be prevented, men content themselves with merely inflicting certain punishments upon those who are so unfortunate as to be detected. And so we do in all the walks of life. We never study to prevent misfortunes.

Traveling as we have it at the present day, to see sights or to gratify a feeling of restlessness, should be discouraged. Little good can come from this practice. If all men had a home and the certainty of a fair living, there would be no inducement for them to wander. Let men settle down and cultivate a spirit of contentment and repose, and then we shall have far less of wretchedness and crime than at present. We shall have no vagabonds, if we do not make laws by which such creatures are developed. In Europe the tramp has been known for centuries, and where poverty reigns, there tramps are sure to abound. The tramp presents in himself one of the forms which poverty assumes, and poverty, every enlightened inquirer knows, is not so much the result of indolence, intemperance and wastefulness, as of our unequal and unjust laws. When the time comes that we shall be just and kind to all men, then we shall have far less poverty and destitution, and, with the disappearance of these evils, we shall cease to be troubled with the beggar and the tramp.

There should be but little travel for the purposes of trade and commerce. Those things can be of service only when men, or groups of men, seek to become rich and powerful. Simply to supply our needs, when society is founded upon a proper basis,

would require but a small amount of either trade or commerce. The number of things from abroad that we really need is very small. If every community were self-supporting, as it should be, there would be little occasion for intercourse with either neighboring or distant communities. What is needed for subsistence and the ordinary comforts, people should have at their command and near their own door. The old way, antiquated as it may seem now, was the best way. Considering the interests of all concerned, the present system of dividing labor and confining each individual, or each community, to some one operation, or some one department, is not productive of the most good or the most contentment for society. When each family supplied its own wants, provided its own food, made its own clothing, and its own implements to a large extent, it really came nearer to fulfilling its mission upon earth than it does under the present system. Through the medium of commerce, we obtain luxuries, but luxuries, it is well known, never improve the condition of mankind. Their presence, on the contrary, is a sign of decline and decay. When they absorb a large share of the attention of a people, it may be safely concluded that the end is not distant. Men lived originally, it is true, in a very primitive style, but to our mind, judging from all the evidence to be obtained, that seems better than our present method, even with our modern improvements. It is plain enough that men need pure air, plain food and a fair amount of exercise, for the good of both body and mind. Those things they had in early days, but they do not have them, in most cases, now.

Whatever is done in a community should be done openly and without any attempt at concealment. Privacy affords the opportunity for a large portion of our crimes and misdemeanors. If people did everything openly, very few things would happen in opposition to public opinion. But as it is now, we not only offer every opportunity but an actual inducement for people to commit crime. A man's house is his castle, according to our present antiquated legal theories, and in this he can carry on any wickedness that he chooses. But the better way would be to have every man's house open to his neighbors and friends at all times, and then the community might feel certain that no wrongs were being perpetrated there. No man has a right to do anything in secret. A desire for secrecy is an indication of itself that something is wrong. No man should do what he is ashamed of.

Every one should be able to give an account of his stewardship at any time. He should be able to account for every dollar that he receives or expends, and he should have nothing in his possession except that which has come to him rightfully. If

every man had to account for all he had accumulated, he would never have anything that did not properly belong to him. It would be no object to him to make unlawful gains in any way, because he could never use them. Why then should he commit crime? What benefit could he derive from it? But what we are now advocating is just the opposite of what is being practiced throughout the civilized world. What is being done is to provide every facility for the commission of wrongs. With the privacy to which men are now entitled, they have every opportunity to carry out their schemes. We allow them to carry firearms and destructive weapons of all kinds, and thus we pave the way for murders, robberies and crimes generally.

The very moment we make concealment impracticable or impossible, crime must disappear. Crime is so very common in the cities chiefly because concealment there is so easy, and detection is so difficult. If every man had a fixed habitation, if his source of livelihood were known to all; if his character and habits were a matter of record, and if his whole life were open to the public, or rather to his neighbors about him, how could he lead a life of crime? Again, if the doctrine of confidence and neighborly friendship prevailed; if every man had all the privileges that were accorded to those around him; if he were certain of food, clothing and the enjoyment of peace under all circumstances; if he saw no great value in money and no opportunity to secure exceptional advantages from its possession, what inducement could there be for him to be guilty of wrongs of any kind? Thirst for money, habits of intemperance, belief in revenge, a desire for rank, together with the carnal appetite, are among the chief causes that produce crime. But if money ceases to have any special importance, if intemperance disappears, if revenge is discountenanced, if the rank is the same for all, and finally, if the relation of the sexes is left more to nature and less to the state and the caprice of men, why should not crimes be unknown?

The reader need hardly be reminded, in conclusion, that the author of this work is opposed to cities and towns. To carry out his plan of life successfully implies small and well-ordered communities. Being opposed to wealth, he would necessarily be opposed to cities, for without wealth there would be no cities, as without cities there could be no real wealth. Civilization itself is a matter of cities; it is with cities that civilization takes its rise, and with their fall the decline of civilization comes.



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Thus far in this work we have discussed principles and considered their application in everyday life. Now, in conclusion, we will present some of these principles again, this time in a more condensed, more direct and more tangible form than before, keeping constantly in view the Problem of Life and seeking to establish such a line of conduct as is safe for every man to follow. An old idea presented in a new form is, for all practical purposes, a new idea. All there is of an idea lies in its expression.

It is the confident belief of the author of this work that reason is a reliable guide in all the affairs of mankind. But before people can reason they must have knowledge, just as they must have light before they can see. As no man can see in darkness, so no man can reason in ignorance. To know, a man must feel; in fact, to know, to think and to feel are all one and the same thing. A man progresses in knowledge according as he advances in experience—never any faster, and usually not any slower. Men learn from their own experience, their own perceptions and feelings. What others have seen and what others may know avails us little. All our knowledge is nothing but feeling that has been elaborated in some way. That which does not feel does not think, does not suffer. To have painful feelings is the penalty to be paid for knowing and thinking. Trees and plants do not suffer, because they do not think or feel; and animals and savages suffer less than the civilized—they have less trouble in every direction—simply because they know less and think less than the civilized races. When we sleep, we do not suffer, because we neither think nor feel. Feeling is not in the body, but in the mind, and were it otherwise a corpse would feel as the living feel. But it must be borne in mind that there are compensa-

tions in this world for all our so-called misfortunes. Our enjoyments come from the same source that our sufferings come—from knowledge and feeling. If trees do not suffer, they do not enjoy; and if animals and the ignorant races suffer less than we do, they also have fewer enjoyments. But when we start out in the pursuit of knowledge, we should be careful that what we secure is of the right kind. A light that leads us in the wrong direction—into mishaps and disaster—is much worse than no light at all.

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In starting out to lay down Rules of Life it is difficult to decide which is most important and which therefore is entitled to be placed at the head of the list. Rules of life are not really fit subjects for comparison, one being as important as another and therefore one being as much entitled to recognition as another. However, the author considers it not amiss to begin with urging a due recognition of the usefulness and importance of labor in all the walks of life. Labor, a moderate amount of activity and exertion, instead of being a curse to a man is a blessing. It is man's most inestimable privilege. Labor is imperative and indispensable. Exercise may be considered a curse to man only when it takes the form of a task and man himself becomes a slave. Exercise is painful and fatiguing only so far as we consider it so, make it so. There can be no true satisfaction in repose. There is no progress to be made and no achievement to be attained through indolence. Achievements are always the result of effort. Nothing can be more vain, more idle, than the wish for nothing to do, or the desire for mere amusement.

Safest of all rules it is, never to devote yourself to a life of pleasure. Pleasure is a costly and deceptive pearl, and you are sure to miss it in the end. The life of a sober and sensible man is immeasurably better at all times than that of one who makes it a business to seek pleasure.

Persevere in whatever you undertake, but always keep your head cool, and never make a fuss about anything. Never count the minutes and the hours. The operation is fatiguing, and it is not worth the effort. There is always time enough, if you will only be patient.

Remember that there are no trifles. A thing is not a trifle merely because it is small. If size were a measure of value, a granite boulder would be worth more than the most valuable diamond. The greatest mistake that a man ever makes is when

he disregards little things. The world is made up of little things—of mere trifles, as many people are disposed to consider them.

Present a firm and resolute front on all important occasions, but do not stand too much upon punctilio or show yourself too great a stickler for what you consider your rights and privileges. If you respect yourself, you will be respected by others. If you deem it expedient or necessary to pay tribute or taxes, do so always under protest. Do not say it is right when you know it is wrong. It is not right to be called upon to pay either tribute or taxes. Every man should pay his own obligations and leave others to pay theirs.

Acknowledge no man as master, and assume no authority over others. Neither judge nor allow yourself to be judged. The more you act as you wish to act, the less you will act like some one else.

Do your own work and rarely associate yourself with others in any venture. In all associations some one must expect to suffer wrong, and perhaps meet with humiliation at last.

Respect those that deserve respect, but do no reverence to any man. Never be on intimate terms with any one. Too much reverence spoils people, as too much tenderness spoils children. We do not advocate a strenuous life, but every one should be ready to meet difficulties, and even to endure hardships, whenever they are encountered.

Nothing is so silly and so unworthy of a sensible man as to seek revenge for injuries suffered or for insults offered. It is even unmanly for one to so far lose his self-control as to become angry.

Never depend for one moment upon such uncertain factors as luck, fortune, favors, protection, or upon the whims of men, or even upon Providence. Depend upon yourself at all times—the only reliable coadjutor that any one can have.

Never follow fashion merely because it is fashion. Have a will and mind of your own, as well as some definite purpose in life. It is not well to be too apprehensive of what people think and say. What people think and say proves nothing. The best of men may be, and often are, wrong in their conclusions.

Never accept gifts of any value, for they will usually be found to be bribes in a disguised form. No man ever gives without having some special design. You cannot afford to be obligated in any such manner.

Never accept a truth merely because it is old. On the contrary, age is often a good reason for its rejection. Truth, like garments, at last wears out. Like bread, even the best of bread, truth becomes stale with age.

It is well to listen to what people say, but never let them get the impression that you are afraid of them. Meet your fate boldly and never be afraid of anything. We can see no place in this world for fear, love, hate, pride, pity or anger.

Wealth in itself is not worth having—it is certainly not worth striving for. Praise and renown are of even less value than wealth. Praise and renown are mere trifles that will never compensate any one for the sacrifice they cost.

Avoid all belief in necessity—and especially the belief that wrong, or evil, or cruelty, or injustice, is ever necessary. How shall we ever know that anything is necessary? At best necessity is only a matter of opinion.

Never allow your opinion to be biased by love, hatred or prejudice. They are always an unsafe dependence.

A king, as a man, is no bigger than other people, and ordinarily he is not any better.

Protection will always be found expensive and dangerous to the recipient. Neither is it something that can safely be relied on.

Always regard advice, even if you do not follow it. But never give advice to others unasked. It is looked upon as presumption, and it is a reflection upon the judgment of other people. It is easy enough to give good advice, but to find those who will follow good advice is another matter. Few people take their own remedies or observe their own rules.

Do not be too confident. Remember that what you think, like what others think, is merely some one's opinion. Never rely upon proof, for nothing can be demonstrated.

The end never justifies the means—the end and the means never have anything to do with each other.

That we are applauded is no proof of our merit; and that we are not applauded is no evidence of our want of merit. We are not able to see that applause enters into the case in any way. It is desirable to have the esteem of worthy men, but praise is a cheap article that can always be dispensed with.

The men who rule this world are those who think; and those who refuse to think are the slaves of the world.

Avoid the practice of giving, except to the destitute. And in every case, exercise judgment.

There can be no obligations resting upon us except those that we have voluntarily assumed. Moreover, it is a question whether we can load ourselves down with burdens self-imposed. Shall others be allowed to take advantage of our own stupidity or imprudent action? Can a man bind himself in slavery? The world says not. Then how can a man obligate himself in any way? We do not think he can.



Remember that the civilized world to-day says that *might does not make right*. But no rights arise from any other source. Hence it follows that there are no true rights. Doubtless this is the fact of the case.

As a rule avoid doing the fighting yourself. Let your antagonist do the fighting, and let him wear himself out or break his neck, as the case may be. That is the famous Japanese Jui-jutsu, or art of self-defence. Nothing strains a man like butting against nothing.

Seek no rewards for meritorious conduct of any kind. How shall you estimate the compensation due for a kind or generous deed? When a man takes compensation for his good deeds he changes their character at once. No man should even demand gratitude for what he has done, nor praise for his achievements. Honors of all kinds are mere baubles. No man deserves honors or compensation from his fellow man. One deed is as meritorious as another. No man does more than he can do; if one lifts more than another, it is merely because he is stronger. Why honor a man because he is strong, or even because he is wise or good? *Reverence no man*, since no man deserves reverence. Compensate no man, for no man is entitled to compensation.

It is not worth a man's while to have lofty aims or high ambition. It is enough that he lives the life of a sensible and worthy citizen.

Avoid contention and never seek to enforce conviction upon others. If you wish to be allowed to think what you think, let others have the same privilege. The only proper way to attain an improved public opinion is by giving people light and leaving them to reflect for themselves.

About this one fact there can be no question: Under no circumstances is one man greater or better than others. No man can with justice be compared to another.

In all your doings seek to perform that which you are best fitted to perform. Measure your strength and never attempt impossibilities. If you build a house, build it as you want it built and as your means justify. How your neighbor builds his house, is not your concern. It is a good thing to have a mind of your own and to let that be your mentor under all circumstances.

Self-defence can never be used as a proper argument by which to justify a wrong. If an act is wrong, a man's doing it because he was afraid would not make it any better.

There is more good in this world than is commonly thought, and what we consider to be evil often proves to be good. It must not be forgotten that giving things a bad name is no proof

that they are bad. At best it is merely some one's opinion. What we call bad goes with others frequently by a pleasanter name. We must repeat again that what people say proves nothing.

We should never entrust our secrets to other people. It is much better to have no secrets. People who hold our secrets have us to some extent in their power. The best way is to keep people at arm's length and give no one the advantage over us. Depending upon other people's good will and honest intentions, or even upon their friendship, is a most unsafe reliance. To depend upon the word of other people is apt to prove a fatal mistake. Do not believe all you hear.

Make no promises and enter into no contracts; no man should suffer himself to be bound by others, if it can be avoided.

Do not praise people, do not blame people. To praise some is to blame others, by implication.

No rule is more important than this: Always act rationally and live in a sensible manner.

Can you teach a stone? Can you teach a child that sleeps? People can learn, it is true, but only when they are aroused and willing to learn. We do not see with our eyes alone. People may have eyes and see not.

We would not say: Eat, drink and be merry, but rather, eat what you like, if it does not distress you, and drink sensible drinks according as thirst dictates. Nature is after all the best nurse and the best doctor that we can find—if we only understand what nature demands. In all things and at all times: Be moderate. That is really the golden rule. It is the quantity always that poisons.

It is a foolish doctrine that is often taught, "that we should love our neighbor as ourself!" Nobody believes in such a doctrine, and nobody pretends to put it in practice. The world could not exist for a day on such an absurd basis as that. It is just the opposite of what nature teaches. Nature says: Provide for yourself first—and let others look after themselves.

Let there be some other motive by which men are to govern their action besides policy. If we love honesty or virtue, let it be for its own sake. Instead of asking if a certain course pays, ask if it is right and proper. When we come down to the facts of the case, it will be found that honesty and virtue do not always pay; in the commercial sense of the term, perhaps they do not usually pay. There are plenty of people who succeed by their wickedness, while there are hundreds and thousands of honest and worthy people who die in poverty and distress. No man succeeds by goodness alone. And yet, policy or no policy,

an honest man and a gentleman will have nothing to do with vice or iniquity under any conditions. He will refuse to give such subjects any serious consideration.

The last subject to which we propose to call attention in this connection is Waste—waste of energy, waste of thought, waste of feeling, waste of money, all of which is so prevalent and so noticeable in every department of civilized life. As sensible beings, why should we ever take a step or perform an action, or why should we invest a cent of money or exert ourselves in any manner, without being assured of some adequate return for the expenditure made or the exertion put forth? To waste knowingly, or to misapply even the smallest amount of labor or property in any way, is the work of a senseless, if not a silly being. The savages, even in their ignorance, do far better than we do with all our enlightenment. Savages have some purpose, some direct object in view, in even the simplest step that they take. They stop when their work is completed, and with them nothing is ever overdone. How is it with the highly civilized? A large proportion of all they do is waste; and what makes the matter worse, they know it is waste. A considerable portion of their time and effort is devoted to securing money with which to pay the priest, the doctor, the lawyer, and the tax-gatherer, nearly all of which disbursements must come in the category of waste. Really, how much richer or happier are they for all the expenditures made in this direction? We are always doing so much for other people and other beings, and remaining so neglectful of the duties we owe to ourselves! We do so much for God! We waste, absolutely waste, one day out of every seven in pretending to worship the Lord—who knows little about us and probably cares less. If he is the omnipotent being that his devotees tell about, he has no need of our assistance or devotion. We are always ready to serve the king, and even to surrender our lives for his benefit, if he happens to consider the sacrifice necessary. Indeed, as willing and faithful servants of both the Lord and the king, we spend a good portion of our time in making sacrifices and performing ceremonies, solely for the benefit of other people. By nature, as well as by education, we have become excessively devotional and reverential.

All that we do without producing valuable or useful results must come under the head of waste; all the books that we read without being made either wiser or better is waste, and so is every unnecessary and unprofitable investment of any kind. All idle exercise for the mere sake of exercise is waste, and so is all that we do merely in deference to fashion. All our superfluous clothing and ornament is waste, and all unusable room, every superfluous word or letter in our writing must come under the same head. Finally, nearly all that is paid to maintain government, to tax people, to enslave people, to punish people, to judge people, to protect or direct people, is waste in its most aggravated form. A very large portion of the time and money spent in acquiring an education, as things go to-day, is essentially a wasteful expenditure. It is much better to be absolutely idle than to put forth efforts which do not produce valuable results. It is far better to remain at home than to be perpetually traveling in the wrong direction.

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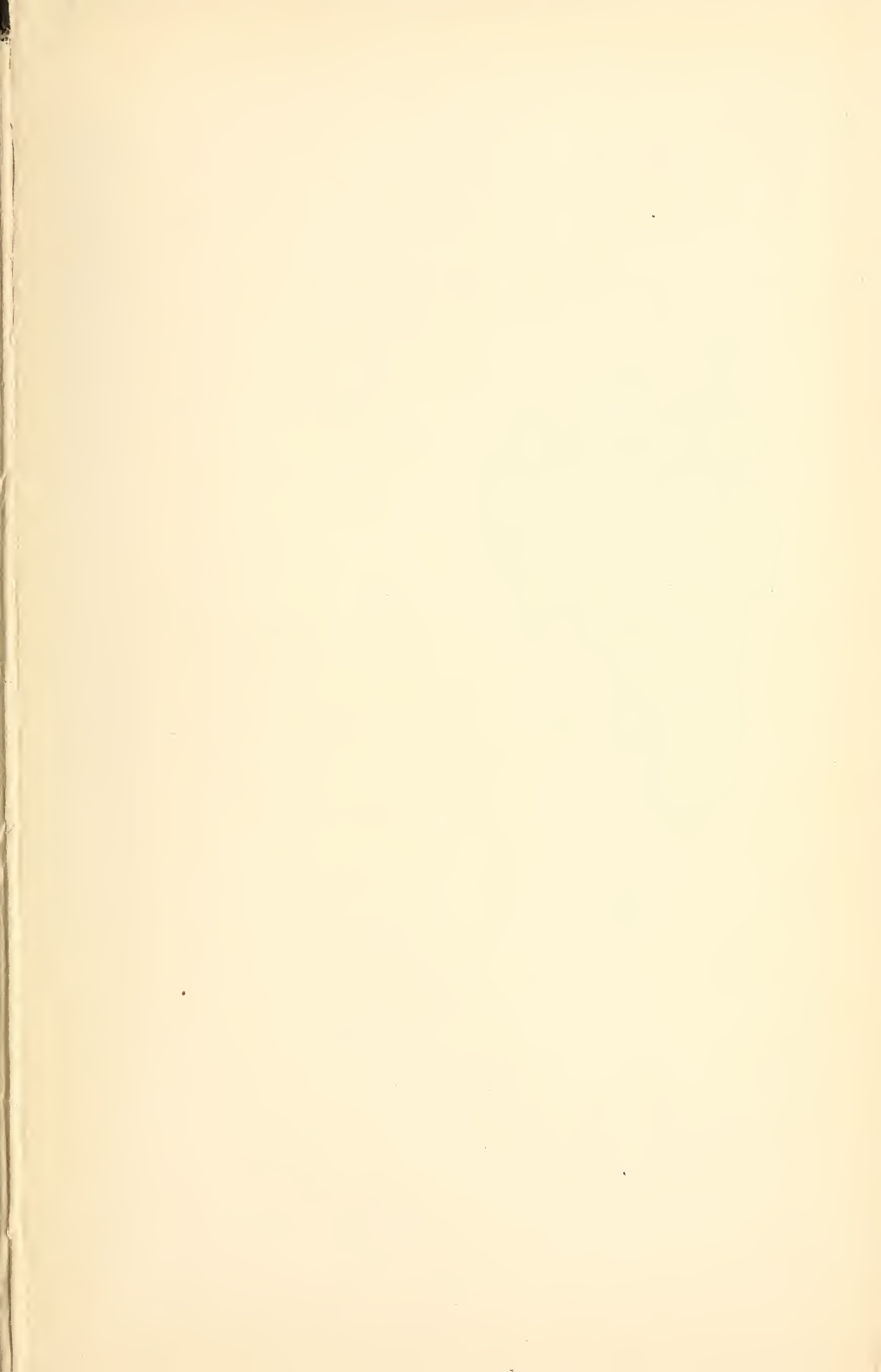
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